

GANGOLY:
Masterpieces of
RAJPUT PAINTING



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H. N. Gangoly



Masterpieces of RAJPUT PAINTING

Selected annotated and described
In relation to original Hindi texts from
Religious Literature, with an Introduction

By

O. C. GANGOLY

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To
Dr. ANANDA COOMARSWAMY

To Whom
All Students of Indian Painting
Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts
Are Heavily Indebted.

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PREFACE.

This publication does not claim to offer any new information, or a new presentation of the subject. In the quotations from Hindi poetry, an attempt has been made to co-relate the subject-matter of the pictures to their literary sources. Many of the identifications are tentative and are far from decisive, or final, and some of the literary parallels offered are meant as mere aids to an understanding of the *motifs* of the pictures rather than as final interpretations. Thus, the subject of Plate XLII, on the basis of the texts quoted, is identified as "Kunja-Bhanga," while it easily answers to the characteristics of the "Swâdjhîna-Patikâ."

The Rajput school forms one of the most characteristic and fascinating chapter of Indian Painting, and is of great æsthetic and spiritual significance. It is somewhat surprising that the miniatures of this school have not attracted the attention of lovers of art to the extent they deserve. This, it is claimed, will provide ample excuse for the present publication. It is hoped that in the form it is presented here, the subject-matter will attract a wider and a more catholic appreciation on the part of connoisseurs of painting in all parts of the world. An effort has been made to include the best examples hitherto discovered, though some have been unavoidably omitted. As a rule second-rate specimens have been passed over and if any example should fail to uphold the claim of a "Masterpiece",—it is craved that an allowance may be made for individual preference. After all, an anthology of pictorial or literary masterpieces is more or less an expression of an individual preference. It may, however, be hazarded that a majority of the examples here collected is likely to survive the critical examination of posterity. At any rate the selection offered, may help towards an understanding of what is really great and enduring in the works of the Rajput Painters. The values of Indian Painting remain yet to be critically appraised, adjudged and determined. On the other hand, it has hardly attained any amount of popularity. The task of compiling this gallery of pictures must, therefore, be a risky one. As indicated above, it has been undertaken with the object of attracting the judgment of critics and connoisseurs and of winning popularity for a phase of painting which has so much originality, depth, and, sometimes, charm and fascination.

There are some who are reluctant to characterize the school represented by this branch of Indian Painting as "Rajput," and prefer the label "Hindu" to indicate the qualities and characteristics which it stands for. But anyone having even a superficial acquaintance with other phases of Indian Painting—as for instance, the Hindu Paintings till lately surviving in the many old centres of culture in the United Provinces, and the Vaishnava illustrations on book covers of the 15th and 16th centuries recently discovered in Bengal—can scarcely have any doubt, that the Rajput Paintings, though related to other branches of Hindu Painting in *motifs*, and, in a general consanguinity of language, stand for some unique and distinctive qualities which clearly differentiate them from cognate phases of pictorial expression.

To Dr. Coomaraswamy, the discoverer of the Rajput school, the debt of the author is immense. Indeed, it is difficult to overestimate the services that eminent scholar has rendered to all students of Indian Painting, in the present and in the future. It is needless to indicate that the present work has been principally inspired by Dr. Coomaraswamy's able monograph on "Rajput Painting" (Oxford University Press, 1916), now out of print, which is likely to remain for some time to come the only reliable guide and authority for students of the subject.

When his work was published, sufficient materials were not available to distinguish the many sub-groups of the Pāhārī, or the Hill schools. In the light of many new materials it has now been possible to recognize the school of Basholi (of which four examples are here cited), as a well-marked and clearly differentiated branch of the Hill schools. Many examples hitherto classed under the School of Kangra, on a closer examination, may well be distinguished by the peculiar local characteristics which may be correctly designated as the School of Chamba. Thus the well-known examples illustrated in Plates XXIII, XXIV and XXV have been attributed to this school,—a judgment which may be open to question, particularly as it has not been possible to set down here, the reasons for the attribution, as the plan of the letterpress has precluded the introduction of any debatable matter.

No pains have been spared to present the materials in an attractive dress and the author will be amply rewarded if the pictures and the school which they represent succeed in winning new admirers and a wider appreciation.

Many hitherto unpublished examples are here presented for the first time. This has only been possible by the generous ^{Centre for the Arts} courtesy of their owners and custodians, principally, Mr. P. C. Manuk; Mr. G. N. Tagore; Mr. S. N. Gupta; Mr. A. Ghosh; the trustees of the British Museum; and Mr. Laurence Binyon. Greatful acknowledgments are also due to the Director and the Secretary of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, to the Curator of the Government Art Gallery, Calcutta, and of the Central Museum, Lahore, for facilities given for reproduction of pictures from those collections. For assistance in procuring loan of an example from the collection of the Tehri-Gharwal Durbar, acknowledgments are due to Mr. N. C. Mehta, I.C.S. For generous permission to reproduce a picture in his collection, it is a pleasure to record thanks to Mr. J. C. French, I.C.S.

The delay in issuing the publication has been due to a number of circumstances beyond the control of the publisher, for which ample apologies are due to the subscribers who have generously helped by their support. It is hoped that the quality of work produced may offer some compensation for the unhappiness caused by the delay.

O. C. G.

1st December, 1926,

12/1, Gangoly Lane,

Calcutta, India.

INTRODUCTION

In a truly democratic age, princes and peasants are happily linked together with a unity of thought and identity of culture,—a common ideal and a common faith. And Life is a practical application of Philosophy. In such a state of society, schools and educational institutions are out of place, for, each function is specialized in a division of labour: the cobbler taught cobbling to those destined to the trade, and the artists taught Art to those whose *dharmma* or calling was Art. It was then that education ran hand in hand with Life and was a part and parcel of it,—not a parenthesis, or a digression from the daily routine. All ethics was based on vocation and the highest aim was to fulfil one's own duty, *swadharmma*, and happiness was found in complete dedication to this calling. In such an organization, all amusements and edifications readily take communal forms, and luxuries are socialized. The disparity between the status of the rich and the poor tends to be minimum and is measured by quantity rather than by quality. Civic and religious duties coalesce. To dig a well is considered more meritorious than to build a Palace of Art. The heads and finials of public fountains are carved with the effigy of gods and inscribed with the prayers of merit for deceased parents; and the highest form of charity is to endow a public church, or a chapel. In such an atmosphere, divinity is revealed in all forms of life; and the human is easily lifted to the Divine, and, the Holy Land is in the heart of man. Through the disciplined and well-regulated human passions, and in terms of their experience of life, men seek to reach and realize their Divinity. The practical rule of Life is outlined by a liberal dualism. For salvation may be attained as much by a complete surrender to Life, as by ascetic renunciation. Passionate faith is, therefore, more valued than arid intellectuality. Experience is more valuable than barren knowledge of facts. Under such conditions, Art has no place apart from Life and is inseparable from religion. The doctrine of "Art for Art's sake" is not understood. Art is an instrument of higher realization, not an end in itself, but a means (*sādhana*) to spiritual ends. The æsthetic flavour (*rasa*) is the inevitable by-product of a spiritual process,—the absolute measure of fitness of the means to the end. Art is not the resultant of a conscious virtuosity, but the product of an inspired faith, in moments of supreme exultation. For, it is by the smelting process of passionate faith that sensibility is transformed into creativeness. Not left to the caprice of individual artists, Art becomes communal and racial, summarising the spiritual experience of a whole epoch, in conventions, forms and symbols,—the meaning and significance of which generations have taken for granted, and which may not be departed from. They quickly crystallize into traditions handed down in pupillary succession through the practices of professional craftsmen. Thus, for centuries, the formulas and conventions do not change, but are only adapted to varying moods and environments. There is not much development in the accepted sense of the word, but a change of direction through a change in environment and local colour. Within the limits of his convention the artist is free to improvise, and a recognized masterpiece is repeated in many versions, keeping to the main outlines of the original design. All Art therefore tends to be anonymous. A masterpiece is not an individual contribution, but the

embodiment of the imagination of a race or an epoch. It is difficult to date individual examples which refuse to fit into a chronology, for the earliest phase, or the latest version, is based, fundamentally, on a well-recognized significant formula. Very mechanical and mediocre versions have existed side by side with inspired masterpieces. There is no gaping void between the Artist and his public. The Artist is only one among many, sharing, indential thoughts and aspirations, with the crowd and the multitude. There is no distinction between "Fine" and "Applied" Art. A picture differs from a decorated Chalice-cup or a Holy Embroidery in their different functions, purposes and materials.

The above picture may be easily taken as the figment of an Utopian imagination. But it is under conditions substantially identical, that most of the masterpieces of Indian Art have been produced. The Rajput Paintings have grown and lived under somewhat similar environments. The schools of Rajput Art embody a whole cycle of Hindu culture, chiefly covered by mediæval Vaishnavism with its doctrine of Love and Faith, which overran practically the whole of Northern India for several centuries. Though rooted in the old classic "Sanskrit" culture, it takes the form of a vernacular Folk Art, the pictorial analogue to the great body of Hindu literature inspired by the renaissance of the Puranic Hindu religion. The Bhāgavata, the Holy Bible of the worshippers of Vishnu, is made accessible to all in the vernacular version of the *Prema sāgara*. The *Gita Govinda* in Sanskrit (12th century) is paralleled by a disconcerting volume of Hindi sonnets and hymns composed by saints and hagiologists like Viḍyapati (15th century), Mīrā Bāi (1470), Sūradāsa (1483?), and a host of others. They belong to a cycle of literature which had for its motif the popular Krishna-cult, the worship and passionate devotion (*bhakti*) to Krishna as a personal god akin to a woman's attachment to her lover. This movement was almost a protest, if not a revolt, against the cold intellectualism of Brahminic Philosophy and the lifeless formalism of mere ceremonials. It made religion more humanistic and more accessible to popular realization. At any rate, it helped to make life more full-flavoured and enjoyable than the schools of asceticism with their denial of Life. The great volume of Hindi literature had another interesting phase. The old Shringāra and Rasa Shāstra (Erotics, Love-lore and Rhetoric) were made available in Hindi recensions not merely as academic formulæ, but revised and classified in terms of actual experience. The imageries of the love of Rādhā and Krishna threw a mystic glamour over the love affairs of human beings—from which Hindi love-poetry derives a peculiar flavour. The literary productions in Hindi represent a complete *vulgarization* of the academic Sanskrit culture, translated in terms of a popular Folk-psychology. In the areas now known as Behar and Bengal, the function has been performed by Gaudian and Neo-Gaudian poets and saints, and by the Bengali composers of Vaishnava hymns, which very often furnish appropriate commentary on many Kangra pictures. The Rajput Paintings, as pictorial commentaries on the Bhāgavata and the Purānas, represent the plastic parallel to the Prākṛita literature and are heavily charged with motifs of Hindu religious faith. They belong to an epoch when music, literature, or painting, was preferred as a medium of culture to sculpture and architecture. They are indissolubly related to Hindi religious poetry. In fact, Hindi poetry and its pictorial counterpart, echo and re-echo each other in their expression of a common stock of religious motifs and imageries, as the texts

quoted in the annotations on the illustrations will amply demonstrate. They support and resemble each other like the twin offsprings of a common parent.

The most absorbing themes are furnished by the cult of Krishna, the divine cowherd, with his *amours* with the Gopis, the village maidens of Vraja (a village near Muttra), idealized in a series of religious mysteries: the Gopis being the symbols of the soul's yearning for the Divine, the whole series of love-episodes being realized in a picturesque pastoral setting on the banks of Jumna. In the hill schools of Jammu, Kangra, Basholi and Chamba the legends of Shiva in his Himalayan haunts are equally attractive themes, and find an appropriate setting in the actuality of the hilly landscapes. For the artists on the plains of Rajputana, the representations of *Rāgas* and *Rāginis* (melody=moulds), pictures of ideal heroines (*nāyikās*), in diverse moods and postures, and other lyrical and love-scenes, seem to have special attractions. As a rule, the lovers are represented not as ordinary mortals but in terms of *Rādhā* and *Krishna*, the Divine couple, the lovers *par excellence* of a truly spiritual union. Even in genre subjects, a tinge of this mystery and illusiveness, invests them with the depth and profundity of a religious theme. Thus the heroine waiting for her lover (Plate XXVII) and the newly-wed damsel led to her lord (Plate XXVI), have a religious halo which is the Biblical echo of "The Bridegroom." They are heavily charged with a passionate fervour which is akin to religious emotion. On the other hand, when *Krishna* and *Rādhā*, the divine couple, is pictured in the homely occupation of exchanging betel-leaves (Plate VIII) it is endowed with a nobility and austerity in feeling and colour which saves it from the vulgar domesticity of a Jack and his Jill. Even the trivial anecdotes of the *enfances* of Krishna (Plate XXXVII) are rendered with a moving tenderness and reverence which will recall the depth and sincerity of some of the masterpieces of the Italian schools. To some of them at least we may fitly apply the characterization of the Sienese Art: *a lieta scuola fra lieta popolo* (a blithe school of blithe people). Yet all the pictures are not always tuned in the same lyrical key. "The Quelling of Kāliya" (Plate XLVI), in spite of its depth of lyrical feeling, attains an epic flavour in the grandeur of conception and the dynamic quality of design. Similarly, *Kāli*, the Terrible Destroyer (Plate XVII), the Indian genius of War, affords a surprising treatment of the *Bhayanaka rasa*, *le beau dans l'horrible*. But the leading theme of this school is furnished by the lyricism of love, as focussed in the infinite gestures and moods of women in all her loveliness. Like George Moore, these artists thought "women is the legitimate subject of all men's thoughts." She is conceived in these paintings in an ideal type with round "moon-faces" seen only in a bewitching profile, with large sensitive eyes, graced by eye-brows which "rival the bow of Cupid," whose dark raven hair ends in the fairest curls, and whose fully developed bosoms, fashioned like "inverted cups of gold," throb with love-longing in their heart, which seldom finds a vocal expression. In the gentle curves of their heads and the sinuous rhythmic movement of their bodies, they are at once, alive with a passionate expressiveness, and, tempered with a shy and serene reticence, a lovely apotheosis of youthful womanhood dedicated to the love-service of her lord, typified by Krishna, the ideal and the divine bridegroom.

The treatment of animals and trees is somewhat peculiar. The cattle, an important part of pastoral life, is treated as a homely guest and, sometimes, endowed with human sympathy

Three.

particularly in the Krishna subjects, where they are introduced as important *dramatis personæ*. Similarly in a Shaivaite story (Plate XXXII), the bull (Nandi) is pictured as a sedate self-conscious guard charged with the duty of keeping off intruders. In "Varsâ-vihâra" (Plate XLIII), the mystery of the Divine union induces the bull to bend its head, in affectionate reverence, to pay the devotee's tribute. Trees, flowers and clouds,—the other elements of Nature are introduced *not* for their own sake, but as significant motifs. In the "Shiva and Parvati" (Plate XXXII), as in the bathing scene (Plate XXVIII), the trees perform the functions of guards and sentinels, posing as formidable *dwârapâlas*, ready to challenge all intruders. In "Vishnu on Garuda" (Plate VII), the trees spell out the movement and the commotion in the atmosphere, and seem to bend their body in an attitude of reverence to the approaching Deity. In Plates XXXVII and XXXVIII, the plantain leaves move in sympathetic agitation to the action of the story. In Plate XXII, the long stems and the decorative curves of the leaves are designed to take shapes to impersonate the Shiva lingam, which the love-sick heroine is anxious to worship. For the "Utkanthitâ Nâyikâ" (Plate XXVII), the anxious heroine, the tree stands in the background, in almost maternal benevolence echoing the agitation of the lady in every leaf. In the youthful escapade of Krishna (Plate XLV), the trees bend and incline in all kinds of attitude to screen off the *liaison* from the gaze of Nanda and Yasodâ. In the picture of "Guna-Garvitâ," the Proud Lady (Plate VI), the introduction of the tree has no other significance but to offer a poetic simile for the beauty and delicacy of the lady, while in the "Varsâ-vihâra" (union in rain) (Plate XLIII), the old tree recalls and pictures his youth again, and bursts forth in sympathetic horripilation. Nothing is introduced which is irrelevant to the expression of the theme. The artists demonstrate, to a fine perfection, the dictum of Henry James : "Form is substance to that degree that there is absolutely no substance without it." In these masterpieces of Indian pictorial Art, there is a remarkable fusion of form and substance. In the whole history of art there has seldom been devised such forms of expression which is eminently fitted to tell the story which the artists had to tell and in the way they wished to tell. They had something to say, for their heart was full of the thoughts which they have set down in such exquisite terms. And the stories are treated not as picturesque material for pictorial treatment, but are felt and transfigured by the radiance of their loving faith. And their works are marked and characterized by a more real and sincere *naïveté* than the sophisticated "simplicities" of many "modern" painters and designers.

And if we let us forget for a moment the subject matter of these pictures, their plastic and chromatic qualities cast the spell of their magic, and we are embarrassed to choose between the variegated claims of their appeal, their sensitive drawing and luminous colouring, the temperate curves of the figures, the magic rhythm and the sinuous grace of the flowing lines of the drapery, above all the charming *ensemble* of their decorative compositions.

In the types they create, in the manner of presentation, and in their peculiar vision in which the spiritual and humanistic outlooks are skilfully fused, the Rajput schools introduce new values to the history of pictorial art. They do, indeed, add something new to the world of art, and this something is indescribably precious. In the history of Indian Art itself, they occupy a peculiar position. The old Buddhist schools of Painting had long ago died out in

India. The art of Hindu sculpture had been driven to the south by the passions of Moslem iconoclasm. The whole of Northern India was overrun, superficially, at any rate, by the tide of Moghul culture. The art of the Rajputs was the only protest against the exotic art of the Moghul Courts, to which it offers very characteristic and fundamental divergences, in temper and outlook, if not, in style and technique. It is the pictorial counterpart to the cultural and political conflict between the Rajputs and their Moghul conquerors, a conflict which soon led to a cultural *mélange* and mutual influences, for, a part of Moghul culture, at least, was Hinduized.* Fundamentally, Rajput Art is the latest form of the expression and incarnation of the spirit of Hinduism, carefully insulated from the influences of the imported Persian culture and nursed in the comparative isolation of the deserts of Rajputana and in the complete seclusion of the Punjab Hill States of the Himalayan Valleys. They represent the last rays of a sunny day, and colour, with their mystical and spiritual emotions, the trailing clouds which hover round the brilliant sunset of old Indian Art.

*The early seventeenth century can indeed be recognized as the Rajput period of Moghul culture. And the pictures reproduced in the last five plates illustrate how the spirit of Rajput culture was absorbed in Moghul Pictorial Art. They are inspired by Hindu motifs interpreted in a Moghul formula.



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Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

A solitary figure placed on a white platform, sentinelled by two animated trees, nodding to each other in a mysterious gesture, the whole set against a background of dull green which is cut remorselessly by the rich black velvet of horizontal sky-lines which, in the upper part, develop into a conventional representation of clouds. Bordered on the top and at the bottom by two strips of green and framed within a pink border, the whole composition is architectural, built up by the bold juxtaposition of masses of severely defined colours. There is not much drawing and the whole design is expressed in terms of colour. There is no attempt to please, or to produce a charming effect, or even any technical virtuosity. A daring vigorousness, almost savage in its brutality, stamps the form of expression with a disconcerting vitality, akin to all Primitive Art. Here we are face to face with the native idiom of early Râjasthâni Art (as Dr. Coomaraswamy has put it), "the tertiary *prâkrita*" of Indian pictorial dialect; the language, which we have yet to learn and understand. The temper as well as the outlook is not only diametrically opposite to all phases of Persian or Moghul painting, but is clearly distinguished from the emotional intensity and the bewitching charm of the Pâhârî miniatures. In Râjputâna itself, this language quickly dies out and is replaced by the sweet realism and the delicate graces of the Jaipur *qalum*. The schematic treatment of leaves, surviving as an archaism, in some versions of heiratic paintings of Srinâthji, and the types of faces and the language of anatomy, echoed in some later paintings of Jammu and Basholi, link up the hill schools with their root in Rajputana.

The picture is superscribed with a small inscription in Nâgri which reads: "MEGH MALAR 6." The text on the back of the picture helps us to identify the picture. We are indebted to Dr. Coomaraswamy for the reading and translation of the text which runs as follows:—

TEXT :

Bangâla râginî megha malârki.

Âpno patî vasi Karanakou vahu naik var bhûp 1.

Sâm mantru tri japati hai dhari muniyâr rūp 11

TRANSLATION :

Bangâla Râginî of Meghamalâra :

Intent on the thought of her husband, heroine with a very noble lord

A woman repeating the *sâma mantras*,* having the aspect of a sage.

Another text offers a every useful guide to the interpretation of the idea of the picture. According to "Râga Ratnâkar" by Deo Kavi, the Bangâlî is thus conceived :—

TEXT :

Lilâ hâv † swa-bhâva hî dhari Bhairava ko bekh

Sarað dyosa ðupahar vani Bangâlî abarekh.

* Mystic syllables or hymns from the Sâma Vedas, sung by ascetics.

† "Lilâ hâv" (according to "Rasa Kusumâkara," p. 43), in the technical language of Indian erotics, represents a mood in which a lover assumes the garb of the opposite sex.

TRANSLATION :

By her own inclination she prefers the male attire, and is dressed as an ascetic
She is expressed (sung) at autumn noon, such is Bangâlî to be pictured.

She is, therefore, an incarnation and a symbol of love=longing and pangs of
separation, a *viyoginî* (one separated from her lover) ardently desiring re-
union.



Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

British Museum.

This is one of the finest examples of the so-called Rajput "Primitives" closely related to the one illustrated in Plate I. Though less daring in composition, it carries all the force and vitality of this series of Râginî pictures. The "melody mould" Bhairavî, is pictured as the spirit of early morning worship, symbolised in the person of the goddess Bhairavî (lit., wife of Bhairava, or Shiva), offering worship at the shrine of Shiva (symbolised as the *lingam*, phallus), accompanied by her companions who join the hymn with accompaniments of drum and cymbals.

The following verses by Deo-Kavi offer appropriate text for the picture :—

"Koul se nain kalâniḍhi so mukh komala kâmalatâ sukhadânî
Devau ma=pyo=ḍha=niṣo=rangî pata lâla lasai sira sâja suhânî
Tâla ubhaya kara rūpa rasâla su pūjati hai sasibhâla bhavânî
Sâraḍa jyoum nisi sâraḍa bhorahi râgati Bhairava=Râga kî rânî"
"Râga=Ratnâkara" (Nâgri Prachârini Sabhâ edition p. 3.)

TRANSLATION :

With eyes like lotus, face like the moon's digit, delicate and delicious like the
Wishing Creeper
Says Deva, she is coloured by the notes "ma," "pa," "ḍha," and "ni," wearing
red robe, her head decked beautifully
Keeping time with both hands, Bhavânî, of luscious form, is worshipping the God
with the crescent (Shiva).
When the "autumn night breaks" into the autumn day, the Queen of Bhairava Râga
is then invoked.

The Râginîs are distinguished from, though related to, the Râgas and their relationship is indicated by conceiving the Râginîs as the female companions or consorts of the Râgas, who are personified as males. Thus the Bhairavî Râginî is considered as the wife of the Bhairava Râga.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This is another of the series of Early Rajput "Primitives" and is evidently by the same hand as the last picture. It has all the vigour and *bravura* though lacking in unity and concentration of the Bangâlî Râginî (Plate I). The palette is almost identical and follows the same linguistic formula. The architecture, borrowed perhaps from contemporary building practices (which have not survived in actual examples), is the dominant element in the composition. The turban is almost Mughal. The lady wears a thin black veil through which the rich complexion of the body and the rich green of the skirt peep in glowing contrast. The picture is a visualisation of the spirit of the Vibhâsa Râginî. The mood of the melody is conceived in the story of a pair of lovers awakened from their happy slumber after the dalliance overnight, by the "untimely" cock-crow of the early dawn. The lover quickly bends his arrow to punish the delinquent cock on the neighbouring tree.

The Nâgri word on the top is Meghmalâr 5, i.e., the fourth Râginî of Meghmalâr.

The text on the back is a Nâgri ðohâ (couplet), for a reading and translation of which we are indebted to Dr. Coomaraswamy.

The text runs as follows :—

"Vibhâsa Râginî megh malârki :

Sava nisi gai surata rasa kriḍata koka vilâsa I

Ekake parjank par niḍrâ karata vilâsa " 11

TRANSLATION :

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Vibhâsa Râginî of Meghmalâr

The whole night passed away in love's delight and enjoyment of amorous dalliance,
United on the bed Vibhâsa sleeps.

The suggestion as to the sleeping lovers being roused by the early cock-crow is indicated in the following Sanskrit text :

Shubh-âmvaro goura-varnaḥ sukântih ḍhirollasat-kundala ḍhristagandâ I

Ārunoḍoye kukkuta-pakṣmī-shavḍe Vibhâsa-râgaḥ smara chârū-mûrti 11

Quoted in " Nâḍa-vinodâ," p. 130, Hindu Press edition, Delhi (Samvat 1953).

TRANSLATION :

Bearing white robes, fair in complexion, and of radiant beauty his cheeks, beaten
with the slowly swinging ear-pendants

At the early dawn, ringing with the voice of the cock, the Vibhâsa-râga is pictured
as the beautiful form of cupid himself.

According to this text, Vibhâsa is a male conception (*râga*) and not a *râginî*.

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

The picture, one of a series, identical in colour scheme and types of figures, apparently from the brush of one artist, is supposed to have come from Jaipur. The treatment of the clouds and the plants and flowers certainly recall the manner of the Moghul artists. The seated lady with the *vinā* is, for all intents and purposes, a Moghul lady, in the type of the face, as in all details of her dress. The decorative scheme, set off in an intensely effective design, makes it one of the most attractive of Rāginī pictures. The actual subject matter is not very easy to identify. We have provisionally identified the picture as the representation of the musical mode "Sārangi," for which the Sanskrit verse is thus quoted in *Sangīta Sārasangraha* :

TEXT :

Kara=ḍhrita-vinā sakhyā sahopavistā cha Kalpatarumūle 1

Driḍhātara=nivāḍḍha-Kavarī Sārangi sà suranginī proktā 11

TRANSLATION :

Carrying a *vinā* (lyre) in her hands, and seated at the foot of the Wishing Tree,
with her confidanté

Her tresses firmly tied up, she is called Sārangi, the very personification of
dalliance.

There is some confusion as to the nature of the tree which should figure in the composition. In the Sanskrit text it is the "kalpa taru" (wishing tree), in some of the Hindi text it is called the "Krishnamūla." The Rāginī, here illustrated, has to be distinguished from Sāranga, and appears to have no place in the traditional thirty-six rāginis. Deo-Kavi justly puts it under the class of "upa-rāgas" (i. e., outside the recognized types).

Author's Collection, Calcutta.

This miniature is an illustration of an early episode of the life of Padumāvati (Padmini), the Indian Helen, (queen of the Maḥarānā Ratan Sen of Chitore), the most beautiful woman of her time, on whose account Chitore was besieged by Sultan Allauddin Khiliji in 1303 A.D. She was the daughter of King Gaṇḍharva Sen of Ceylon. She had a pet parrot (Suka) Hirāmani by name, which could speak and follow the human speech. One day it escaped from its cage and was caught by a fowler who eventually sold it to Rājā Ratan Sen of Chitore. The parrot one day described Padmini and her beauty to his new master who at once fell in love with her and renounced his throne to make a journey to Ceylon, on foot, with the parrot, to win the fair lady. Arriving at his destination, after many adventures, he stopped at a garden with the speaking parrot who undertook to act as his messenger of love. It went back to its old home once again, and sat on a tree in the palace of Padmini, who was glad to find her old friend and to allure back to the old cage, as depicted in the picture. Next followed secret meetings of the lovers and their marriage to which Gaṇḍharva Sen ultimately gave his consent. The story is told in an epic poem, in Oudhi Hindī, under the title of "Padmāvati" by Malik Muḥammad Jaisi (circa 1540 A.D.)

TEXT :

Chaupai :

Puni Rānī ḥansi Kusar pūcchā I kīta gavanehu pīnjar Kayi cchuncchā 11
Rānī tumḥa juga juga sukḥa pātū I cchāja na pankḥiḥi pījar thātu 11
Janyu bhā pankḥa Kahān thir rāḥanā I chāḥaḥi uḍā pānkh jayun ḍaḥanā 11
Padumāvati, Suyā=bhet-khanda.—Bibliotheca Indica Edition, p. 394.

TRANSLATION :

Then the queen smiled and asked his welfare and said : "Where did you go, leaving the cage empty ? "

"You are a queen, and it is fit that you remained perched on the throne for ages and ages.

It is not fit for a bird to remain in a cage for ever. When he grows his feathers, why should the bird stay ?

When wings grow on his sides, he must needs fly."

The parrot, then, describes how on hearing of her beauty from the bird, the prince fell in love with her.

TEXT :

Hayi Sase jag iḥaḥi payi bhānū I taḥan toḥār mayin kīnḥa vakānū 11
Suni Kayi virahī=chingi oḥi parī I Ratan pāyu jayu kānchan=kārī 11
Kathina pema virahā ḍukḥa bhārī I Rāja cchāḍi bhā jogi bhikārī 11.

[Ibid. p. 396-397.]

TRANSLATION :

"The Sun (Ratan) is indeed worthy of the moon (Padmini). Therefore I described your beauty to him.

On hearing from me he was struck by love-longing, the spark of separation fell into his heart.

When the gold is burnt and twisted into a leaf, it then becomes worthy of carrying a gem.

Love is hard to fulfil, and the pang of separation is intense. He renounced his kingdom and turned a begging ascetic."



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Author's Collection.

The sheer power of its pictorial quality and the peculiar treatment of the subject matter of this example, make conflicting demands on our appreciation. The central horizontal lines as the pyramidal tree are daring in their breach of all recognized methods of composition, which is only redeemed by a still more courageous colour scheme. The tree in flower must be excused as a poetic simile for the delicacy of her body, or the fragrance of her complexion, for, the subject demands a wintry landscape, as suggested in the glimpse of the blue horizon at the top. The story is of the type of lover classed by the rhetoricians as "Guna-Garvitā,"—one confident and, even, proud, of her accomplishments and love-artifices to detain her beloved. The long months of rains keep her "hero" (nāyaka) indoors, busy with homely occupations of love, and there is no fear for separation. The early approach of winter tempts the "hero" to stir out in search of sports and adventures, much to the chagrin of the lady. She knows that the melody of the (Mallāra Rāga) induces rain, and in her despair brings out her *vinā* to sing a song which may fetch the clouds. The idea is very happily enshrined in a terse but charming Hindi *dohā* :

TEXT :

"Pūsamās suni sakhinipai sanyī chalata savār 1

Gaḥikar vin pravīn tiya rāgo rāg malār 11."

Bihārī Lāl : "Sata-sāyia".—(Vyankateswar Press Edition, p. 48, 131 *Dohā*.)

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TRANSLATION :

The month is Pous (November and December), and her comrades (*sakhis*) have brought the news that her Lord is going out to ride
The adult lady (i.e., mature in love-experience, as opposed to the newly-wed *nabodhā*), takes her *vinā* and sings the melody of rain (Mallāra Rāga).

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

If the love-stories of Râdhâ and Krishna afford peaceful but passionate motifs for the brush of Râjput artists, some of the adventures of Krishna (Vishnu) offer opportunities of designs rich in their dynamic quality as in the plate opposite. The King of Elephants, while quenching his thirst in a lake on mount Trikûta, was seized by a crocodile and called out to Lord Vishnu for help. The cry of his devotee in distress brought the Lord from his abode in heaven, and he rushed to help him, riding on his favourite mount Garuda, the King of Birds. A sense of space as well as a feeling of motion is conveyed by very simple means. The trees bend gracefully under the pressure of the strong wind raised by the hurried motion of the Lord's passage through the air. The following text is the nearest parallel to the picture :

TEXT :

"Suni gaja=râj pukâr Kripâ=sindhuké rûp Hari 1

Hoyi Garuda âsowâr chakra leyi dhâvata vhai." 11

—Vasudeo Kavi.

TRANSLATION :

"On hearing the cries of the King of Elephants,

Hari, the picture of compassion, rode out on his mount Garuda, and rushed on, flourishing his discus (*chakra*)."

The episode of the Gaja=udhârana (salvation of elephant), an exploit of Vishnu, has been treated by many Hindi poets, and notably by the senior Beni and Padumâkar. The latter in reciting in a verse ("choupâi") the various episodes of heroic deeds of benevolence of Vishnu or Râma ("dayâvira") has thus expressed the episode—

TEXT :

"Ko asa dîna=dayâla bhayo Dasaraththake lâlse sûdhe subhâyan 1

Doure gayanda uvâriveko prabhu vâhan chhodi upâhane pâyan" 11

—Padumâkar : "Jagad=vinode," p. 196, Bombay Edition.

TRANSLATION :

"Who was born so kind to the wretched as the son of Dasaratha (Râma)
the pure and simple in heart

He ran to save the Elephant, leaving his vehicle and his shoes."

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

The offering of the betel leaf (tâmvula) is in some Vaishnava sects an important part of the daily ritualistic service to Krishna. This is amply supported by many hymns and sonnets. Two quotations from the prayers of Narottama Dâs Thâkur will suffice.

TEXT (1):

"Shyâma-gori ange ðiva çhandaner gandha, 1
Châmar ðhulâva Kave herava mukha çandâ ; 11
Gânthiyâ mâlatir mâlâ ðiva ðohâr gale, 1
Âðhare tuliyâ ðiva Karpûra tâmvule." 11
—Narottama Dâs.

TRANSLATION (1):

"To the body of Shyâma and his fair consort will I offer the scent of the sandal paste. O! when shall I see their moon-face, and fan them with fly-whisk, weave a garland of mâlati (jessamine) and place round their necks and reach to their lips betel leaf scented with camphor."

TEXT (2):

"Kanka sampata Kari Karupûra tâmvula bhari, yogâyiva ðonhâr vadane."
—Narottama Dâs.

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TRANSLATION (2):

"Will fill my cup of gold with betel leaves scented with camphor with which to serve their lips."

The exchange of betel leaves, in terms of Indian social etiquette, is a token of mutually affectionate regard.

In our picture, the significance of the betel leaf is the relation of Râdhâ and Krishna in their progress of love. The Nâyaka (lover) is favourable (anukûla) to the heroine and is disposed to reciprocate her love. "Anukûla Nâyaka" is thus described in "Rasika Priyâ":

TEXT:

"Oura Kai hâsa vilâsa na bhâvat sâðhunako yaça siððha-subhâvai, 1
Vâtavahaiju sadânavahai hariko u kahun Kachhu shodhu napâvai 11
Âsana vâsa suvâsana bhûkhan Kesava kyohun yahou vani âvai, 1
Movina pâvana Khâtaju Kânha suvairaki dhoun yaça prîti-Kahâvai." 11



TRANSLATION :

"You never think of the smiles and charms of another for this is the immaculate conduct of the good and the true (lover)

Oh Hari ! say that to which one can conform always.

One can somehow, anywhere and everywhere, find one's room, clothes, and scents and jewels.

But O ! Kānu ! you say you will not chew betels other than those made by me.

Tell me is this to spite me, or to love me ?"



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Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

Her lord and her lover (*pati*) has returned (*āgata*) from his haunt and adventures. His horses and entourage are being housed in the stables, and his retainer as he carries back the smoking outfit, is met at the gate by his lover, the housemaid, who offers a welcome betel. These tiny incidents culminate in the chief love-drama enacted in the upper apartment where the lady of the house welcomes her lord with a passionate embrace. But let Sundara, the poet-laureate of Shah Jahan, recite the story of the Āgata-Patikā (one whose lord has returned), in his own inimitable way.

TEXT :

Savaiyā :

Parḍesate Sundar pītama āye hulaṣa vilāsa vadhe sigare, 1

Ura Kantha lagāyi lai lalanā gahi gādhe ānanda son anka vhare ; 11

Tarakī sutanī ḍarakī angiyā mani mālanatai mahi lāla gire,*

Janu pīke milain tiyake hiyake angarā virahāginike nikare. 11

—“Pitama milana”, Sundara-Shringāra, Kāśī edition, p. 108.

TRANSLATION :

The lovely lover has come back from far-off land, the news has brought its rain of smiles,

By her breasts and neck, her deep long embrace spells her passionate joy,

Her dress strings loosen and her bodice is stretched and strained.

The strings of her red rubies drop on the floor,—

For, the close-knit (pressure) of two beloved hearts

Squeeze the fire out of the agony of separation.

The heroine is of the class known as the *proudhā*, experienced in love, and hardly embarrassed by modesty.

* Another reading given in the Benares edition runs as follows: “Mani māla te tuti ke lāla pare.”

Collection, Pothikhānā, Jaipur Darbar.

In this little masterpiece of Rājasthāni Painting, the artist seems to have wavered between two opposite forms of expression. The style of his language appears to partake of the passionate lyricism of a love story and of the depth and mystery of a canonical religious fresco. The picture which is on paper, effects a very happy compromise between two divergent æsthetic languages. To realise the necessity imposed by the story, a conventional perspective is resorted to, which repeats the Central Asian and Far Eastern manner of picturing a scene as viewed from a certain height. The sheer difficulty of loading the space with a unwieldy group of crowds is overcome in a manner worthy of Uccello, or Benozzo-Gozzoli. Out of a chaos of forms are evolved three rhythmic circles which seem to symbolise the mystery of the "moon-dance" of Krishna. As one gets used to the numerous elements of the composition, the centre of the circle gradually unfolds like the petals of a lotus, and presently one discovers the Divine Couple, the observed of all observers, to whom, all the variety of gestures of the innumerable damsels in the mystic *Rāsa-Mandala* is dedicated, and on whom the gods of heaven rain down their flowers. For almost each individual of the group the artist attempts to find a distinct attitude. Yet they are strung together, and pulsate in unison, to one single harmony, as the words of the Poet Nandram so happily express it :

TEXT:

Kavitta :

"Sodasa hajār vāl sodasa shringār sājī, sodas varas vais mudita vihār hai,
Vāhunson vāhu Jori mori mori anganason kīnho mahāmandal akhandal apār
hai ; 11
Kahai Nandram taise tār au sitār milichurī khankār sur pancham uchār hai,
Jhulata dīsān vīdīsān āsmān hū laun chham chham chāī ghungharūki Jhankār
hai 11

—Nandram, quoted in "Kāvya Prabhākara," p. 356.

TRANSLATION :

Sixteen thousand damsels each of sixteen summers, decked in sixteen forms of toilette.
They turn and turn and joint their hands to make the "great circle," without break
and without access.

Says poet Nandram :

The *sittars* and the *tamburas* (stringed musical instruments) mingle with the jingle
of bracelets and voice the melody of the "fifth note."

All manners of beings peep and swing from all parts of the heaven which is re-
sonant with the sweet bells of dancing feet.

The *Rāsa-Mandala* is the exact parallel to the "General Dance" to which Christ invited
the souls of men and is alluded to in a well-known mediæval carol : "To-morrow will be
my Dancing Day."

The figures of the Buddha and Shiva, created in types of super-human masculinity, are some of the richest gifts of Indian sculptors, excepting perhaps some types of Indo-Javanese images. In the whole array of Indian stone sculpture, there has hardly survived any worthy representation of Vishnu, or Krishna, the Indian Eros—the hero of the love-pastorals of Vrindâvan. It was left to the Rajput artist to enrich Indian painting by his immortal creation of a Krishna-type. This has survived in an eighteenth century coloured cartoon and a finished study of Krishna and Râdhâ dancing in the Râsa Mandala, which is one of the treasures of the Pothikhânâ (library) of the Jaipur Darbar. The type must have been created earlier, but it survives in these two examples and is continued in numerous miniatures of the Kangra school, in the 19th century.

In his large almond eyes (“*nain visâl*”) emphasized by collyrium, arched eye-brows, faultless nose and captivating lips, he is the very incarnation of loveliness, which, by the addition of scorpion locks and pearl ornaments, somewhat tends to a feminine sweetness and grace.

The dance of Krishna in the mystic dance known as “Râsa” (literally, appertaining to *rasa*, passion, or love-feeling) is described by many Hindi poets. Of all, Sûra-dâsa, perhaps, brings most sincere ecstasy to bear on a realistic picturisation of the dance of the Lord, by the skilful aid of onomatopoetic words.

TEXT:

“Nirtata shyâma nânâ-ranga l
Mukuta lataṅgaṇi bhrikuti mataṅgaṇi dhare natavara anga
Chalati gati kati kwanita kinkini ghūṅghurū jhanakâr l
Mano hamsa-rasâl vâṇi arasha parasha vihâr l
Lasati kara pahunchi upâjaya mudrikâ ati jyoti l
Bhâvason bhujâ phirata javahin tavahin shobhâ hoti l
Kavahun nirtata nâri gati para, Kavahun nirtata âp l
Sûrâke prabhu rasika-shiromani rachyo râsa=pratâp. ”

—Sûra-sâgara, “Râsa=Lilâ,” 60th verse.

Nawal Kissore Press edition, p. 538.

TRANSLATION:

Shyâma is dancing in all variety of moods and poses.
His crown sways, his eye-brows move and pose in all the arts of a clever dancer,
The motion of his waist makes the girdle sing and the anklets jingle,
One fancies one is listening to the sweet voice of a pair of geese as they touch
each other in dalliance.

The bangles glitter and the armlets and the rings shoot their rays
When with passion he moves his arms, what grace the movements bless.
Now he dances after the gait of ladies, and now in manner of his own
The Lord of Sûra (Sûra-dâsa, the poet), is the jewel of the Passionate, and builds
his dance in the depth of ecstasy.

Collection Pothikhana, Jaipur State.

In this portrait of one of the Maharajas of Jaipur State, of whom a series of portraits are in the Pothikhana, we find Rajput art in an entirely new rôle. Though influenced, if not inspired, by the Moghul School of Portrait-painting—for native Indian Portrait-painting has a tradition of its own—our example hardly repeats anything from the Moghul manner except the profile picture and the view through a *Tharkâ* (window) hung with a carpet. The actual features of the portrait are idealised and fitted into the formula of Rajput art—the treatment of the eyes and eye-brows—being almost an echo of the “Head of Krishnâ” studied in the last plate. An individual portrait is almost raised to the level of an ideal type. Contrasted with the usually minute and meticulous details of Moghul portraits,—Rajput Portraiture has a broad generalised simplicity—which partakes of a monumental quality of design.

The Maharaja commemorated in this fine portrait is Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh (1778—1803 A.D.), father of Jagat Singh and grand-father of Jai Singh III (1819—1834 A.D.), of Jaipur. As the inscription on the portrait indicates, it is the portrait of the Prince at the age of thirty. It is dated Samvat year 1851 (i.e., 1794 A.D.). The inscription reads: “Sarva shri Maharajadhiraj Shri Sawai Pratap Singhaji umari varas tiski Samvat 1851.”

In the court of this Prince flourished the great Hindi poet Padumakar. The poet has celebrated the famous sword of Maharaja Pratap Singh, by name “Samser,” in the following verses :—

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TEXT :

Kavitta :

Dâhana te dûnî tej tîgunî trisûl huntain
Chakrin te chougunî châlâk chakra châlîtân
Kahai Padumakar Pratap Simha Maharaj
Aise “Samser” ser satrun pai ghâlî tain 11

TRANSLATION :

More shining than fire, and more fierce than the Trident (of Shiva)
Four times quicker and swifter than the Discus (of Vishnu)
Says Padumakar, Pratap Singha Maharaj
Brought such sword of his, “Samser,” on his enemies, as on the heads of tigers.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Although undraped figures frequently occur throughout the whole history of Indian Art, the nude as such has no place in the practices or the canons of Indian artists. There are actual texts chiefly religious in their significance which forbid the sight of undraped female figure. But in practice such injunctions have been frequently avoided, if not disobeyed. In sculpture it has been the general practice to indicate the distinctive characters of the female form (*stri-chinha*) to distinguish it from the mere male. And even in Buddhist painting, as at Ajanta, the female form frequently appears to be undraped. But here the nude is apparent rather than real. For, the figures are not painted without any drapery—but the beauty of female form is revealed by a device which renders the covering as an extremely thin and transparent robe through which the body is made to appear in unclothed beauty. In literature, the breach of the injunction against the study of the nude is very happily suggested in the legend of the curse of the Goddess of Music which fell on Kālīdāsa, the great Sanskrit poet, who had the audacity to describe, in verse, the beauty of the form of the Goddess with all unconventional details. In Vaishnava literature, the description of the *Sambhoga* (union) is not forbidden by the canons of art and it is not surprising to find materials which offer to the artist an opportunity to study the nude. One of the verses of Viḍyāpati actually records the exclamation of the poet at the sight of a beauty in bath. “*Āji majhu shubha dina bhelā, ramani pekhanu sinānika velā.*” (This is a happy day for me, I have seen a lady at the time of her bath.) It is some such idea that is expressed in our picture here. It is the artist's worship of the beauty of human form—for its own sake. There is a bravura and a dashing unconventionality which invest the composition with a moving vitality and mark it as one of the remarkable masterpieces of the Jammu School. Another feature of the picture is the fact that it represents a *genre* study free from any religious or symbolical signification. The literary parallel is furnished by the following verse of a living Hindī poet :

TEXT :

“ Manjanke jalase nikasī, vikasī mano Kanjanate sukhmārī
Chīra mahinme dāminisī damakay dutī angankī ujīyārī
Thāndī taruvara chhāhanme teon vāsudevajū phulī ghanī phul-vārī
Kesa lurāi gahī ekanhī te Kara ekate ārasī rūpa nihārī ”

—Vāsudeo.

TRANSLATION :

Coming out of her bath, she looked like the Goddess of Beauty out of the Lotus.
Her thin cloth set forth her shining complexion, glistening like lightning.
She stood under a tree, which, Vāsudeo says, was bursting with flowers.
Her hair dishevelled—she stood alone gazing on her beauty in the mirror.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The sport of tending the cows (*Gochâran Lilâ*) the favourite occupation of Krishna, as the Cowherd of Vrindâban, symbolising the Divinity ministering to the Souls of men, is an absorbing theme in Vaishnava poetry, drama and painting. Though there are many charming and beautiful representations of this subject in numerous Rajput pictures, this example from Jammu—has an intensity and a haunting mystery—which in spite of the coarseness and crudeness of the types represented, mark it as a piece of unique distinction. The complete fusion and unity of the physical and psychic presentation—an absolute identification of form and content, is a marked feature of the composition. The cowherd boys and the cows are equally entranced by the magic flute—and they all converge on the centre of the composition, on Krishna on the lotus throne—the observed of all observers. His music has set all the world astir—the human, animal and the vegetable world. The lotuses unfold in ecstasy as the hanging plants move in response to the music. The cows are transfigured and humanised—and they cannot make out if their “minds have stuck to Mohana (the enchanter) or Mohana’s mind has stuck to them.” The text of Raghunâth provides the appropriate literary parallel :

TEXT :

“Vage=vane=varahike=pakhâ=shira venu vajâwata gaiyana ghere I
Ya viðhi son Râghunâth kahai khsana hota jude nahin sânjha savere I
Ankhi na ðekhiveko nahin paiyatu paiyata hai nitahin karinere I
Mohana son mana mero lagyoki lagyo manason mâna Mohana mere II

Verse 43, “Rasika Mohana”

By Raghunâth.

TRANSLATION :

All bedecked, with the peacock’s plume on his head, he plays on his flute
encircled by cows.
Says Raghunâth, my mind is not parted from Him for a moment, in day or night.
He whom nobody is fortunate to see is now visible everyday and in close
proximity.
(I cannot make out),
If my mind has stuck to Mohana (Enchanter) or Mohana’s mind has stuck
to me.

Collection of Mr. A. Ghosh, Calcutta.

We have on the plate opposite an unfinished drawing of one of a series pictures illustrating the "Siege of Lankā," an episode of the Rāmāyana, of which two finished pictures are cited in two plates next following. The large size of the original (33"×24") clearly suggests that much of what one finds in Rajput Painting are derived from an earlier school of mural paintings of which very little remnants appear to have survived. As early as the time of the composition of the famous drama of "Uttar-Rāmcharita" by Bhavabhūti (8th century), we have a glimpse of the practice of illustrating the story of the Rāmāyana in series of large scrolls of paintings—such as Lakshmana, in the drama, spread out for the admiring gaze of the royal ladies of Āyodhyā. Unfortunately we have no examples from Rajputana of such illustrations on such large scale. In Jammu, where the series appears to have been drawn, the "Siege of Lankā" seems to have been very popular and the only episode which attracted the brush of the artist. The composition here is one of a very powerful dramatic significance—the two parts of the pictures being very skilfully disposed in two groups, the animated demon army flowing out of the gate of the fort being contrasted by the army of apes seated opposite, in the midst of which Rāma and his general are seen engaged in a little council of war. The following verses from "Jagat-vinode" offer a literary parallel to the picture.

TEXT:

Kavitta :

Ita Kapi ricch uta rākchasahiki chamūnal
 Dankā deta vankā gadha lankāte kaḍhai lagi 1
 Kaḥai Paḍumākar umanda jagahike hit
 Chittamain Kachuka chopā chāvaḱi chaḍhai lagi 11
 Vānanke vāhiyekō Karme Kamān Kasi,
 Dhāyī dhūradhān āsmān me maḍhai lagi 1
 Dekhate vanī hai duhūn ḍalkī chaḍhā chaḍhi me
 Rām ḍrigahū pai nek lālī jo chaḍhai lagi 11

—Paḍumākar : "Jagat-vinode," Bombay Edition, p. 170.

TRANSLATION :

On this side apes and bear, and on the other, the army of the demons
 With beat of drums, heroes came out of the fort of Lankā,
 (Says Paḍumākar), bent on doing good to the world
 The heroic spirit of fighting was in their heart.
 They placed arrows on their bows and pulled
 And clouds of dust ascended the skies.
 The two armies facing and meeting each other were worth seeing
 And the eyes of Rāma inclined to redness.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The plate opposite is from an important series of pictures representing scenes from Rāmāyana, popularised in Northern India by the widely read Hindi version of Tulsidās (1532 to 1624 A.D.). Chapters chosen are those forming the episodes of what is known as the Lankā-Kānda—the incidents of the abduction of Sītā by Rāvana, the demon-king of Ceylon (*Lankā*), and the siege laid by Rāma and his army to recover Sītā from her captivity in the Āshoka-grove. The style of the narrative language of the artist partakes all the qualities of epic grandeur as well as a naive charm, which invest the pictures with a largeness of conception and a peculiar flavour not met with in any other branch of Rajput Painting. During her captivity Sītā was constantly pestered by the demon-king with overtures of love, which were indignantly refused by the faithful wife of Rāma. Keshavdās has pictured the incident in a very characteristic dialogue in his “Rāma-Chandrikā.”

TEXT :

Rāvana :

Shuno Devī mo pai kacchu ḍristi ḍije

Ito shocha to Rāma Kājai na Kije 11

Vasai DandKāranya dekhai na kou

Jo dekhai mahā vāvaro hoy so u 11

Sītā :

Trina vich dai voli Siyā gambhīra vānī

Dasha-ratha suta ḍwesi Ruḍra Bramhā na bhāsai 1

Nishichara vapurā bhū Koun na syo mūlanāsai 11

Āti tanu ḍhanu-rekhā neka nāki na jāki 1

Khala shara khara ḍhāye Kayon sahai ticchatāki 11

Viḍakana ghana ḍhūre bhakshi Kayon vāja jivai

Shiva-shira—shashi shri ko Rāhu kaise so chhivai. 11

Kesavaḍās, “Rāma-Chandrikā,” 13 Chapter, p.144, Vyāntakeswar Press Edition.

TRANSLATION :

Rāvana :

Listen to me, O Lady! Be pleased to give me your glad eye,

Forsake thy deep sorrow for the sake of Rāma;

He lives in banishment in the forests of Dandaka, not cared for by anybody;

It is absolutely foolish and insane to care for him.

Sītā :

Covering her face with her veil, Sītā said the sonorous words

“Who art thou, Oh Ten-faced Imposture, and whose city is this?

[See Back]

Even the gods Rudra and Brahmā cannot flourish for a moment—if they turn
enemies to the son of Dasharath (Rāma),
Thou art only a weak demon of this earth, what being Rāma cannot quell outright ?
One cannot cross the faint mark of his bow, how can one face the sharpness of
his flying and deadly weapons ?
How can little birds, even if they soar near the clouds, save themselves from the
clutches of the hawk ?
How can Rāhu touch the digit of the Moon on the brow of Shiva ? ”

PLATE XVI (B).

SIEGE OF LANKĀ.

This example is another from the same series of pictures depicting scene from Rāmāyana—apparently from the same brush. Here an episode of the long narrative of the wars between the army of Rāma and that of Rāvana is told in a powerful, moving and rich composition. The demon-king has met with some reverses in the long and weary wars with the besieging army of Rāma, and he is represented here as entrusting one of his best generals to lead his best warriors to a sanguine battle to overcome and defeat the invading army once for all. The army which has been rigged out with a fair sprinkling of cavalry and elephant brigades has indeed a formidable appearance and has been drawn by the artist with a deal of invention and imaginative realism.

The following lines from Tulsidās will furnish an appropriate verbal commentary on the composition :—

TEXT :

Chali nishāchar anī apārā chaturanginī chamu vahu dhārā
Vividha bhānti vāhana-ratha-yānā vipula varana patākā dhwaja nānā
Chale matta gaja yutha ghanere manahun jalad mārutake prere.
Tulsidās : “ Rāmāyana,” Lankā-Kāṇḍa, Bombay Edition, p. 646.

TRANSLATION :

The limitless demon army goes forth, in various groups, in the four sub-divisions
In variegated troupes in all kinds of mounts, vehicles and chariots carrying flags
and standards of various colour,
The heavy brigade of mad elephants dashed forth and looked like clouds driven
by winds.

Author's Collection.

The worship of the terrible in Art is not only recognised by the Indian canons—but is one of the specialities of Indian Art. The *bhayānaka rasa* (the feeling of the terrible) is one of the six legitimate subjects or materials for Art. The recognition of its place in art, has lifted Indian Art from the somewhat mediocre level of the mere representation of charming, attractive and sugary subjects. And incidentally, it helps Indian Art to attain a standpoint which transcends the limited Western conception of beauty and ugliness. "*Le beau dans l'horrible*," has no doubt, attracted, now and then, many Western worshippers of beauty but the destructive or repellent aspects of nature as a rule, have no place in European artistic codes. What is understood by the sublime in Western Art, is quite different from the worship of the terrible in Indian Art. The nearest Western equivalents to the Indian treatment of the terrible—appear to be such works as the "Study of Satan" by Michael Angelo and "La Tempête" by Rodin.

Turning to our picture, here, the subject has been treated more frequently in Jammu, than anywhere else in pictorial Art. Kālī, the Black One, is the personification of an aspect of Durgā, in the diabolical spirit of Destruction. This is the form which the goddess assumed in the fierce battle of the gods and the demons. The story is related in the *Chandi* and its Hindi version is found in *Durgā-saptashatī*, commonly called *Durgā-pāth*, of which an illustrated version has been discovered. Our picture may have been one of a similar series of illustrations.

According to the story as given in the Hindi version, the Demon-King first sent his General Dhūmrālochana, but the goddess turned him to ashes by her breath. Then the two demons Chanda and Munda were sent against her. On their approach, Durgā's face became the colour of ink (*Kālī*) and from her wrinkled front emanated Kālī, the Black One, of terrible appearance. She attacked the host of the demons and devoured, wholesale—elephants, horses, chariots and men. The subject offers ample opportunity for the artist for invention, imaginative skill, and originality of conception.

We have sought in the verses of Nārāyan, rather than in the text of *Durgā-saptashatī*, a description of the subject. The robust and even rugged verses, convey the sense of the picture echoed in terms of skilful phrasing with remarkable accuracy, which is impossible to render in a translation :

TEXT :

"Kād Kādāt Kruddhīt Kripān Kādhi Kālī chālī
 Āti māḍavāre mātwāre nayan jhapKat
 Khuv Khulai Kesh chāye eḍi loun Nārāyanju
 Danta vārī pānti divya dāminisī ḍamKat
 Vikata visāl ati bhrikuti kutil kārī
 Bhārī bhārī mundankī māḍ toḍi gapaKat
 Lāg bhare lālachme lār tapa tapaKat
 Lehuke lapete jiv lap lap lapapaKat."

—Nārāyan.

TRANSLATION :

Rattling her angry sword, the Black Kâlî goes forth ;
Drunk to intoxication, her eyelashes close and shut,
Her much dishevelled hair hangs up to her heels, says Nârâyan,
Her array of teeth flashes more than the lightening in the sky
Terrible and expansive in her visage, furrowed by awful wrinkles of her eyebrows.
She breaks and eats up huge heads from the garlands of skulls, (for),
Her hunger knows no satiation, and her mouth is always watery (with expected
feasts),
Her tongue, bathed in blood, dangles to and fro, and in big drops flows out.



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Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

It is somewhat embarrassing to offer a verbal commentary on the picture. It is difficult to convey in words the 'story' or the underlying motif of the picture. Apparently a *genre* study of a pair of deer cannot be taken to represent any story or incident. But the vision and the treatment carry it to a plane of symbolism and an atmosphere of religious thought which it is impossible to associate with the subject-matter itself. The deer pretend to pose in an attitude of fight—but in their well designed and schematic gestures seem to perform a religious ritual. The hovering tree overhead is not a mere 'tree' but with all its leaves pointing upwards fulfils the function of an important *dramatis personæ*,—of some esoteric significance. It is easy to recall Landseer's "Deer Fight"—but it is impossible to establish any analogy of thought, for, what a yawning chasm separates the two pictures in their subjective and objective outlook and treatment! In Indian religious and philosophic thought animal-forms (*pashu*) offer a rich vocabulary of spiritual symbolism which has for ever tinged the attitude and vision of the pictorial artist. He can hardly paint or depict animal-form for its own sake. Frequently he invests animal life with human emotion, and more often uses them as symbols of spiritual ideas. The animal,—*pashu*, in the technical sense of Indian philosophy—is the soul entrapped in a physical body from which it seeks emancipation. In our picture, 'more is meant than meets the eye' and the deer stand for a symbol the meaning of which is not clear from the picture itself.

The picture bears on the top an illegible inscription in Tonkri character which has not been fully deciphered.

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Central Museum, Lahore.

The pictures which are associated with the hill state of Basholi (near Kangra, at one time the seat of the Balauria Rajas) easily distinguish themselves from those of Kangra, by the types of their figures, as also by a vigorous masculine style which almost borders on a coarseness of treatment as contrasted with the charming refinement of the Kangra pictures. If they are less attractive in colour as well as in conception from the Kangra miniatures, the Basholi pictures are marked by a more depth in conviction and vigour in execution. They are also characterized by more unconventionality and originality of design. It is easy to relate them to the "Primitives" of Rajputana rather than to the pictures of the Kangra, or even of the Jammu School. The drawing in the accompanying plate, though easily recalling the forcible manner of the Rajput Râginis, of which we have studied three examples in Plates I, II and III, is less schematic, and more inclined to realism, which is tempered also with a daring sense of decoration. The flowers and leaves of the tree are as much an essential part of the picture as the figures themselves, depicted in a peculiar type with large almond eyes. The School of Basholi, hitherto not recognized as a separate phase of the hill schools, occupies by reason of its unique feature a special niche in the gallery of Rajput Painting. As usual, the story of the plucking of flowers, the subject-matter of the picture, is related to the love of Krishna and Râdhâ. To be used for decorating, or perfuming the bed of Krishna, the simple act of gathering flowers attains the solemnity of a ritual. Raghunâth, author of "Rasika-Mohan," draws a very remarkable picture of the same subject and puts the episode in the mouth of a Gopi (companion of Râdhâ), who tempts Krishna to come and pay a surprise visit. The Hindi verses offer a very happy commentary on our picture.

TEXT :

"Âyi hai sânjhiko torana phûl, torâwati thâdî sakhi chhavi râsate,
Begi utai chali dekho valâi leon, he Raghunâth lâgyo manjâsate ;
Bhounranki lagi bhîr rahî, aru bhîr chakorankî jehî âsate,
Bhîtar bâgke shovit hoti hai, mâlatî vâsate pyârî prakâsate."

—"Rasika-Mohan," by Raghunâth. Nawal-Kissore Press Edition, p. 31.

TRANSLATION :

She has come to pluck her evening flowers, she gets her chum to lend her help
and what a happy picture they make.

Oh, Raghunâth, I vow to rob all your unhappiness, do come quickly and see her
whom you love to see,

Many bees crowd, as many *chakors* (partridges) gather, to find shelter
Inside that grove so tempting in its beauty, for the *mâlatî* (jessamine) is in frag-
rance and your Beloved is in radiance.

Collection of Mr. J. C. French, I.C.S.

In no other known example of Rajput pictures the love of Krishna and the Gopīs is rendered in terms of such eloquent frankness and intense religious fervour. With the eyes of the artist, we find the Gopīs (Milk-maids in love with Krishna) are feeling that they are in the presence of their God—the objective of their love and their prayers. The picture helps us to realise how the love-service of the Gopīs culminates in union with their divinity. There is no superficial charm or sentimentality about this picture. It is deeply tinged with a religious conviction and a haunting sense of mystery and exaltation worthy of the best phases of the early Italian primitives. It should be noticed that the faces of the three Gopīs are almost identical,—they are representatives of types rather than individuals. There are numerous Hindī *bhajans* (hymns) which illustrate the idea of the picture, which can be easily related to the text quoted below :

TEXT :

“ Kara jodike thāḍi rahai ek vāl vinay kari sis navāwati hai
 Eka chāmara chāru ḍulairahai, eka phūlahārā pairāwati hai
 Vasuḍeju deti hai pānki biri, suprita hiye sarasāwati hai
 Eha Krishnakō swāgato kai vanitā, ura prema ou bhakti badhāwati hai ” 11
 —Vāsuḍeo.

TRANSLATION :

With joined palms stands a girl and bends her head in all humility,
 While another keeps the fine fly-whisk moving,
 While another still—puts on the string of flowers and,
 (Vāsuḍeo, the poet), presents a gift of *pān* (betel leaves) and makes the glad heart
 more full of flavour,
 Thus (the worshippers), by such service of welcome to Krishna, augment the
 passionate love and devotion of their hearts.

Metropolitan Museum, New York.

The translation of the personification of musical modes in terms of pictorial designs is one of the remarkable achievements of Rajput Painting. To visualise the musical forms with all the atmosphere of their original conception and the accuracy of their individuality—makes a heavy demand on the sympathy and skill of the pictorial artist. Like the sculptors called upon to render in plastic form the mystic conception of the Bramhin iconographer, the illustrators of the Râginî pictures have performed a difficult task. The translation of an already formulated conception would appear to leave very little room for individual or original interpretation. But in many cases the illustrators of the Râginîs have produced works of remarkable originality. Our picture on this plate is a valuable gem in the Metropolitan Museum, and is a masterpiece of unique distinction. It is not possible, unfortunately, to relate it to any known series of Râginî pictures. It therefore stands quite by itself, captivating in its vision and refreshingly vigorous in its composition. The type of the figure and the treatment of trees recall the manners of the Basholi school. The hill schools very rarely offer any examples of Râginî pictures. Our example, therefore, derives additional interest. The identity of the Râginî has offered some difficulty as no known example of this particular Râginî has yet been traced. It is one of the “*upa râginîs*”—not covered by the recognized thirty-six classes.

The *dhyâna*, describing the personification of the Râginî, is quoted from S. M. Tagore's Sangitsâra Sangraha : (Calcutta edition Samvat 1931).

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TEXT:

Shrikhandâ=shaila=shikhare Krita=sannivâsâ
Mâtanga=mouktika=Kritottama=hâra=yastih 1
Âkrisya chandana=taroḥ Kila Shâvirî sâ—
Himvadhâtî Valayamujwala-nîla-Kântih 11

TRANSLATION :

On the top of the Malaya hill she has made her home
She has made a magnificent rope of big “ elephant pearls ” her necklace
She has a complexion of bright blue hue, and
She tempts the snakes, which like bangles, circle the sandal trees, such indeed
is “ Shâvirî.”

Central Museum, Lahore.

She is a disappointed lover (*Vipralabdhā*) "who has made an appointment through a messenger who fails to fetch him and is grieved because he does not come ('*Rasikapriyā*')."
It is a common convention of Indian erotics to suggest that during the period of separation—the call of the flesh, the tyranny of Cupid, is very insistent—for the lover is away. When she is united with her beloved, the arrows of Cupid are stilled. Krishna is, thus, called "*Madana=Moḥana*," the enchanter of Cupid, for his presence assuages all sensuality. Separated from her lover, the lady (*nāyikā*, heroine) is an easy prey to Cupid and her only alternative is to pray for Shiva, the Great Yogī, who burnt the God of love into ashes. The leading *rasa* (flavour) of the love-story, the sense of desolation, is symbolised in one monotonous green against which the figures and the trees are silhouetted in noble and harmonious relief. The decorative trees, pictured with five different stems, representing perhaps the five flowers of Cupid (*Pancha-sāyaka*) are designs of phantasy, wholly in keeping with the subject matter. There is a daring modernity in the composition which is worthy of some of the latest "howlers" of the Post-Impressionists. In Indian erotics, the heroines are classed under three heads, viz., "*mughḍā*" ("green girl," too much bashful), "*madhyā*" (whose expression of love is tempered with some modesty), and "*proudhā*" (the adult and mature in love, not embarrassed by any modesty). The disappointed lover (*vipralabdhā*) is likewise grouped under three heads and our example belongs to the last class. Our picture is actually inscribed on the back with a Hindi verse from "*Sundar=Vilās*," which reads as follows :

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TEXT :

"Uthi āyī hai dekhana ko piya pās vanāyū vanyo sunikāi gharko, 1
Kahi sundar bhītara jāy jo dekhon to khoj nahin kahun kânhar ko ; 11
Ihi vichahin vān kamān gahe kartān uthyo ari sambarko, 1
Jav jānyo vachāvana kehūm sakhi tav dhyān dharyo hiya me harko." 11

—"Sundar=Vilās," Benares edition, p. 37.

TRANSLATION :

She came forward all dressed to meet her lover at the rendezvous—leaving
her own room empty,
Says Sundar : She looked for him in and out, but not a trace of Kânhar
(Krishna) ;
Meanwhile Cupid, the Enemy of Shankara (Shiva), has put arrows to his bows,
And Oh, comrade ! when she knew she had none to save her, she could
only sing at her heart a hymn for Hara (Shiva).

PLATE XXIII. PORTRAIT OF RĀJĀ PRAKĀSH CHĀND. SCHOOL OF CHĀMBA
Central Museum, Lahore.

Of the remarkable group of portraits contributed by the artists of the hill school, the example, on the plate opposite, is a very typical specimen of a class. Though the picture represents a chief of Guler, a principality founded by Harichānd, one of the chiefs of Kangra, the style is more related to the remarkable series of Chamba portraits than to those of Kangra. The portraits of the hill school, of which the Sikh school represents the latest phase, stand on a quite different footing in relation to the Moghul school on the one hand, and the Jaipur school on the other. Marked by a peculiar quality of realism, they are tempered with a refreshing charm and vigour which distinguish them from the conventional formula of the Moghul school.

As to the personality of the portrait, very little is known of Rājā Prakāsh Chānd (1797=1820 A.D.) of Guler. From an inscription on stone found near the temple of Vilāspur recorded by Ananta Devi, queen of Prakāsh Chānd, it appears that the chief reigned about the year 1797 A.D. He was the grandson of Dalip Singh, the great-grandson of Rājā Mān Singh, and twenty-fifth in descent from Harichānd—who was the hero of a little romance. Succeeding to the *gadi* of Kangra, Rājā Harichānd fell into a well in a hunting expedition unobserved by his companions, and he was given up as dead. Returning to his capital after 27 days, he found that his name has been effaced from the roll of the living, his wives had become *satis*, and his younger brother Karam Chānd was reigning in his place. Realising his embarrassing position, he sought to seek his fortune elsewhere. He selected a spot on the banks of the Vāngangā and founded the fortress and town of Haripur and the principality of Guler. According to him a “gwalā,” cowherd, pointed to Harichānd a locality where a tiger and a goat were seen drinking water together. “*Gwal dekhāyo thaur anikai rākho naun Guler.*” (A cowherd came and showed the place and he (Harichānd) gave the name of Guler.)

Many of the Guler chiefs have commemorated their names on the pages of history by their bravery. They were on friendly terms with the Moghul Emperors. Rupchand, one of the chiefs, was openly admired by Jahangir for his valour and was sent by him on an expedition to the Deccan, and on a subsequent expedition against Prithi Shah of Gwalior, died fighting. On Rājā Mān Singh, another of Guleria chiefs, Shah Jahan conferred the title of Lion, and made a gift of a horse of high value (*virudh dayo puni sinhako turaga dyo vahu māl*). Some of them gained high favours from the Emperors and held important military commands and on behalf of their Moghul patrons led their victorious armies beyond the Indus to Quandahar and Badakhshan—(“The Guleria Chiefs of Kangra,” by Pandit Hiranand Shastri, “Journal of the Punjab Historical Society,” Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 132=151).

There is another and a more elaborate version of this portrait in the Central Museum, Lahore.

PLATE XXIV. SHĪTAVIHĀRA (SAMYOGA-SHRINGĀRA). SCHOOL OF CHAMBA.

Tagore Collection, Calcutta.

This is one of a series of pictures from the same hand with inscriptions on the fly-leaf covering each picture, very attractive in colour and accomplished in execution. From the types of figures of the headgears represented, this series may be attributed to the school of Chamba, which seems to have features by which it may be distinguished from the school of Kangra. The subject of the picture appears to be one of the illustrations of the twelve months of the year. The month represented is clearly the winter month Pous (December), suggested by the warm covering worn by the lovers and the stove in the foreground, and the little fire in the out-house. Emblematic representation of the twelve months of the year have been the subject of a Hindi poem by the famous Kesavaḍas, under the name of "Bārah-māsia" (twelve months), an illustrated version of which is known to exist. The twelve months are described in terms of the enjoyment of lovers in union according to the atmosphere and surroundings for each month. The "winter enjoyment" (Shītavihāra) is likewise an instance of "love in union" (*Samyoga-Shringāra*) as opposed to love in separation (*Viyoga-Shringāra*). The former is thus defined: "Priya pyārīko milana jāhan; so samyoga-shringār, sohata lalanā lāla sang, chakāi chak anuhār" ("Kāvya-Pravākṛ," p. 424) i.e., where the Lover and the Beloved are in union—that is "samyoga-shringāra," the lady and the lover are seen to associate like a pair of birds called Chaka (chakravāka). In our picture the lovers are resting under the cover of one wrapper ("ekahi rajaime rajai karvo karu.") The following verses of Paḍumākṛ provide the necessary commentary:

TEXT:

Pūsa-nishāme suvārūnī lai vani vaiṭṭhai dūhūn maḍke matawāle, I
Teon Paḍumākṛ jhumai jhukai ghana ghūmi rachai rasaranga rasāle, II
Shītako jiti abhīta vai suganaina sakhi Kachhu shāla dushāle, I
Chhāk chhakā chhavi-hīko piye maḍa naynanke kiye premke peyāle. II(21)
—"Jagat-vinode" by Paḍumākṛ; Vyānkateswar Press Edition, p. 142.

TRANSLATION:

In a December night they have drunk to each other cups of *varuni* wine and are seated quite tipsy.
And says Paḍamākṛ, now they swing and droop in deep slumber, and now indulge in delicious game of dalliance;
And once having conquered cold, they are not afraid, and oh, friend! they no more care for shawls or wrappers,
They drank to fill, the wine of each other's beauty, by making the eyes of each the cups of love.

PLATE XXV(A).

HOUR OF COW-DUST.

SCHOOL OF CHAMBA.(?)

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

PLATE XXV(B). HOUR OF COW-DUST (UTTARA GOSTHA). SCHOOL OF CHAMBA.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The architectural setting is so close to that in some of the pictures from Chamba, that we have preferred to attribute this picture to that school rather than to Kangra. Krishna, with his "five-pointed" crown of peacock feathers (*mora mukuta*), as also the types of cowherd boys are repetitions familiar to us in the Kangra miniatures, but they appear to have been the common properties of all artists of the hill schools.

The story of the picture is the return of Krishna, the Divine cowherd, from the pasture in the evening, which is symbolically expressed in Indian language as the 'hour of cow-dust,' the time being indicated by the clouds of dust raised by the cows as they return at sun-set (*go-dhūti*). The hour is an important one in the daily life of the village cowherds—for the tired herd need water, food and all kind of attention before they are put in to their berths for the night. In the mystic significance of the legend of the Krishna-mystery, the return of Krishna is looked forward to by His lovers (worshippers) and the gopis (milkmaids) in various stages of life—for they have not had the sight of Him for a whole day. The artist has only pictured a familiar pasture scene from the daily life of his own village, but he saw with transfiguring eyes, and the homely pastoral attains the love-mystery of the Krishna-līlā. The picture must have been a very popular one, and more than one version of the theme has been found. It has also been enshrined by many moving hymns in the current Hindi *bhajans*. In the Vaishnavite Kirtan-songs the subject matter is known as the "Uttara gostha" (return from pasture), and is described in all its details in a series of songs arranged dramatically, with each episode of the story significantly interpreted. The text of Suradās, perhaps, furnish the nearest parallel to our picture :—

TEXT :

"Madhya Kiye lai shyāmakō sakṭā bhaye chahun pās, l
Vaccha dhenu āge Kiye ho āwata Karata bilās l
Vājata venu vikṭhān savai apne rang gāwata, l
Murali dhvani gorongbhi chālata pag dhūri udāwata l
Mora-mukuta shirasohai manhun chandra-Kan-shit l
Āsa-pāsa nāchata sakṭā ho vich Hari gāwata gīt l
Dekhi harkhi Vraja-nāri Shyāma par tan man vārati l
Yakataka rūp nihāri rahī metathi chita ārati." l

—"Sūra-Sāgar, Vatsa-haran Ādhyāya," Nawal Kishore Edition, p. 294.

PLATE XXV(A).

HOUR OF COW-DUST.

SCHOOL OF CHAMBA.(?)

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

PLATE XXV(B). HOUR OF COW-DUST (UTTARA GOSTHA). SCHOOL OF CHAMBA.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The architectural setting is so close to that in some of the pictures from Chamba, that we have preferred to attribute this picture to that school rather than to Kangra. Krishna, with his "five-pointed" crown of peacock feathers (*mora mukuta*), as also the types of cowherd boys are repetitions familiar to us in the Kangra miniatures, but they appear to have been the common properties of all artists of the hill schools.

The story of the picture is the return of Krishna, the Divine cowherd, from the pasture in the evening, which is symbolically expressed in Indian language as the 'hour of cow-dust,' the time being indicated by the clouds of dust raised by the cows as they return at sun-set (*go-dhuli*). The hour is an important one in the daily life of the village cowherds—for the tired herd need water, food and all kind of attention before they are put in to their berths for the night. In the mystic significance of the legend of the Krishna-mystery, the return of Krishna is looked forward to by His lovers (worshippers) and the gopis (milkmaids) in various stages of life—for they have not had the sight of Him for a whole day. The artist has only pictured a familiar pasture scene from the daily life of his own village, but he saw with transfiguring eyes, and the homely pastoral attains the love-mystery of the Krishna-lila. The picture must have been a very popular one, and more than one version of the theme has been found. It has also been enshrined by many moving hymns in the current Hindi *bhajans*. In the Vaishnavite Kirtan-songs the subject matter is known as the "Uttara gostha" (return from pasture), and is described in all its details in a series of songs arranged dramatically, with each episode of the story significantly interpreted. The text of Suradas, perhaps, furnish the nearest parallel to our picture :—

TEXT :

"Madhya Kiye lai shyamaKo sakha bhaye chahun pas, I
Vaccha dhenu age Kiye ho awata Karata bilas I
Vajata venu vikhan savai apne rang gawata, I
Murali dhvani gorongbhi chalata pag dhuri udawata I
Mora-mukuta shirasohai manhun chandra-Kan-shit I
Asa-pasa nachata sakha ho vich Hari gawata git I
Dekhi harkhi Vraja-nari Shyama par tan man varati I
Yakataka rup nihari rah metathi chita arati." I

—"Sura-Sagar, Vatsa-haran Adhyaya," Nawal Kishore Edition, p. 294.

TRANSLATION :

Placing Shyâma (Krishna) in the centre of all, the comrades spread on all sides,
The calves and cows are placed in front, and they frisk and play as they come ;
All the pipes and horns go forth, each his own notes playing,
The sound of the lute moves the cows to sing as they raise a cloud of dust ;
The crown of peacock feathers glistens on the head, like unto a crescent moon,
The chums on all sides dance and frolic, while Hari (Krishna) in the centre
sings his song ;
The women of Vraja (Vrindâvana) are ravished by the sight, and in body and mind,
on Shyâma (the Black one) themselves they pour,
And in steadfast gaze feast their eyes and quench their hearts' desire.



Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

Tagore Collection, Calcutta.

The newly-wed bride with her timidity and charm has offered a fascinating theme for the brush of a Pahari painter. She is being led across a star-lit pavilion, to the chamber of her lover by her *dūtikā* (messenger), while a sleepy servant waits at the door with a torch and scent-spray. A cast shadow is almost unknown to the manners of Rajput painters and is evidently borrowed from Moghul painters.

A “*navodhā*” (newly-wed) is defined in the verse quoted below. The second verse offers ideas very close to the theme of the picture.

TEXT :

“Āti ḍarate ati lājate rati na chāhai pati sang, 1
Tāhi navodhā kahata hai je pravīn rasa rang” 11
—“Ras-Rāj,” by Motiram

TRANSLATION :

Too much timid and too much shy, and averse to meet her lord
She is called a “*navodhā*” (newly-wed) by the learned in the lore of love.

TEXT :

Indira Gandhi National

“Dūri ḍharo ḍṭpak jhīlīmīlāt jhīno tej, sejkē samṭp chhaharānyo tamatomaso, 1
Dūlahai ḍurāi āli keli ke mahalgai pelike patāi vadhū saraḍke somaso.” 11

“*Salajjarati*” by Deo-Kavi, in “*Sujānvinoḍ*,” Benares edition, p. 9.

TRANSLATION :

The lamp is moved away with its weak and flickering flame, deep darkness
hovers round the bed,
The companion (confidante) who has laid the lover in concealment in the
“chamber of love,”
Shoves in the (unwilling) damsel, fair as the autumn moon.

PLATE XXVII. UTKÂ OR UTKANTHITÂ NÂYIKÂ (PARAKÎYÂ). SCHOOL OF KANGRÂ.

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

A lovely lady standing on a bed of leaves under a tree in a dark night awaiting, in nervous suspense, the coming of her beloved at the place of tryst—such is the picture of a Utkâ Nâyikâ, one anxious for her beloved. She is thus described in “Rasika Priyâ”: “Kauna hun heta na âiyo, prîtama jâkedhâm ; Tâko shochati shocha hiya, Keshava Utkâ vâm.” (Translation : ‘Keshava says she is an Utkâ (Utkanthitâ, anxious) lover whose beloved, for some reason or other, has not come to her place and who yearns for him with a heavy heart.’) Some of her unspoken (*prachhanna*) thoughts are thus expressed : “Is he ill ? Or is his love for me false ? Or is he afraid of the rain at dead of night ? Or does he want to test my love ? O ! Keshava Rai, why he does not come to-night ? What is troubling him ?” A parallel idea is suggested by the following verse :—

TEXT :

“Yamunâke tir vahai sîtal samîr jahân madhukar madhura karata mandâ sorahain I
Kavi Motirâm tahân chhavison chhavillî vaithi anganitain phailata sugandhake
jhoKorahain II

Prîtam vihârike nihâri veko vât aisî chahun or ðiragh ðrigani kari ðourhain I
Ek or mîna mâno, ek or Kanjput, ek or Khanjan chakor ek or hain ”. II

—“Motirâm ” Kāvya=Prabhākara, p. 213.

TRANSLATION :

It was the bank of Yamunâ, with its cool breeze, and the bees droning soft music.
Says poet Motirâm : There stood waiting a ravishing beauty from whose limbs
came breaths of sweet perfume,

To watch the path of the beloved Vihâri (Krishna), the sweep of her long eyes ran
on all sides ;

A look on one side roused her passion, a look on another gave her eyes the
droop of a lotus,

A look on yet another quarter made her eyes quiver with fear, like those of
Khanjana (wag-tail) (lest she be seen) ;

While another quarter, where He was expected, drew from her long hungry eyes,
Looks like those of *chakora* (bartavelle), (the bird typical of the separated
lovers).

The nude, as such, has no place in Indian Painting and the example here reproduced (with a few others), offers interesting exception to the general rule. The scene is laid inside a garden cut off by a white wall and the bath itself is guarded and sentinelled by a row of blossoming trees which offer daring decorative motifs—which throw the bathing ladies into a somewhat subordinate position. There is a surprising unconventionality and a lack of restraint in presenting human figures—which has a refreshing charm—not always met with in Indian painting. Water-sports of Râdhâ and the Gopīs are well represented in many Hindi verses and one may be quoted here as an accompaniment to the picture. It may be remarked that the figures in the picture reproduced, here, are *not* Gopīs (milkmaids), associated with the love and sports of Krishna.

TEXT :

“Kau gaī jal paithi tarunī aur thārī tīr,
 Tinhi layī vulāya Râdhâ Karati sukha tanu kīr ;
 Ek ekahī dharati bhujā bhari ek chhīrakati nīr
 Sūr Râdhâ hansati thārī bhīji chhavi tanu chīr.” 11

“Sūr-Sāgar,” Nawal Kissors Press Edition, 1902, p. 432.

TRANSLATION :

Some reached the steps of the water, while a young damsel tarried on the bank,
 To them Râdhâ calls out to join her lively sports ;
 A pair holds each other in embrace, while another spurts water (at them),
 Sūra, (the poet), says : Râdhâ is laughing as she stands, quite a picture in her
 wet garments.

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

It is difficult to choose between the glowing and lovely colour scheme and the powerful composition with its subtle sense of spacing—as the determining element which marks the picture as a *chef d'œuvre* of the Kangra School. The brilliant complexion of the fair lady, somewhat enhanced in its effect by contrast with the portion of the body under water, is undoubtedly the highest pitch in the colour scheme, in which the pinkish red of the river bank and the cool greens of the trees, offer such well-organised harmonies. The dull grey silver tone of the river, treated in the familiar conventional method, offers the very necessary balance and a very sympathetic setting to the vivacious and youthful figure in the unrestrained brilliance of its colouring. The body of the young lady, half immersed in the water, recalled to an Indian critic, "The image of a crescent moon half enveloped by a passing cloud." The imagery, so characteristically Indian, is indeed a fitting commentary on the bewitching beauty of the illuminating figure.

The story is the well-known Panjabi folk-tale of Sohni-Mohinwal in which Sohni, in love with Mohinwal, a tender of buffaloes, living on the other side of the river, crosses the river every night, supporting herself on an inverted water-pot. The crisis of the story is reached in the discovery of the clandestine visits when her brothers substitute, for the baked jar, one of unbaked clay, and this melts away half-way in water and the girl sinks and dies.

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

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PLATE XXX.

THE BIRTH OF GANGĀ

SCHOOL OF KANGRA.

India Office Collection.

PLATE XXXI.

THE BIRTH OF GANGĀ

SCHOOL OF KANGRA.

Museum of Fine Art, Boston.

The legends of Shiva and Pārvati, receive in the hands of the Kangra painters somewhat different treatment from that of the Krishna cycles. Shiva is after all the typical Himalayan Yogi and is pictured in an environment of the landscape of the Punjab hills, with his favourite bull and his wife and sons seated by a camp fire. He is treated in a homely intimate fashion in which there is not much room for idealisation.

The plates opposite are typical examples of illustrations of the legends of Shiva. The story is the birth of Gangā (river Ganges) who was invoked, from heaven, by the austerities of Bhagīratha, the great-grandson of Sagara, for the salvation of the sons of the latter. The river first descended on the head of Shiva and was lost for ages in his matted locks, but the severe penances of Bhagīratha at last induced the Great God to set her free, as we see in the pictures. The treatment is quite naïve and somewhat tends to border on the humorous.

Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

The Hindi verses quoted below are very close literary commentaries on the pictures and echo the sincerity and the naïve artlessness of the presentation.

TEXT :

“ Pārvatiko bhujāgara meli rahī Shivako bhujse lapatāye,
Gangā-tarang dharai shiratain vahu varṭha jatānike vīcha samāyī ;
Vrikha gajānana indura eon Giripai Vasudeoju prema vadhāye,
Ekahin pāyen par thāre rahe tapa bhūpa Bhagīrath dhyān lagāye.”

—Vāsudeo.

TRANSLATION :

The arms of Pārvati are locked in the embrace of Shiva,
The rhythm of Gangā for many years wandered in the locks on his head ;
The Bull, the elephant and his mount inspire the love of Vāsudeo,
While on one leg stands Lord Bhagīratha performing austerities and meditation.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The story of the picture is borrowed from an episode in the Bramha-vaivarta-purāna, known as "Ganesha-purāna" and is current in the popular Hindī version of Ganesha purāna-bhāṣā by Tulasiḍāś (Benares edition, Bhārgava Press). It is a dialogue between Shiva and Pārvatī who, on being informed that each of the skulls on the garland of Shiva, represented an incarnation of Pārvatī—she asked for a boon or a *vija mantra* (magic syllable) by which she could be released from the necessity of birth and death (*tāte mora hota nahin nāshā*) and she begged of him to confide to her the secret of immortality (*dasi jani kripa ava kijai vija-mantra hamahum kahan dijai*). And Shiva started confiding the great secret which took more than 12 years to recite and, in the meantime, the fair auditor fell asleep exhausted.

TEXT.

Dohā :

Shankara vole vachana tava, sunahu Umā mama vāni
Vipula jīva sava shailapar, Kehi vidhi Kahon vakhāni

Choupai :

Jo vaha mantra sunai Koyu pāvai, tāke Kāla nikata nahim āvai
Ājara amara so hoyi bhavāni tāte Kehi vidhi Kahon vakhāni
Tav Girijā Kaha girā suhāyī, dehu jīva prabhu sakal bhagāyī
Tav Shankar chitaye Kari Krodhā, bhāge jīva sakala chohun rodhā
Ādi pipila jīva vahutāyī, savai jīva udhi chale parāyī
Jīva-rahiata giri dekhi Kripālā, vaitha vicchāi nāga-ripucchālā
Jehi tarutara vaithe Shiva yogi, tahavān vasata Kira ek bhogi

Dohā :

Tehi main andā ek dhari, Kira so gayo udāy.

Choupai :

Vija mantra Shiv Umahin sunāyī, andā jīva sunai chitalāyī
Kahata sunata andā vada vhaṣā, vāraha varkha viti tavagayaū
Jojo mantra Umahin Shiva dīnhā, andā phūti so sava suni līnhā
Vāraha varkha viti java gayau, niḍrāvasa girijātava bhayaū
Sovata jāni-girīsha-kumārī, tavate Kīre dīna hunkārī
Yahi antaramaham Kathā sirānī, Umā jagāyī Kahā Shiva-vānī
Jahan lagi sunā Kahau sava gāyī, antara lakhi Shiva Kahā risāyī
Kathāpunita mai Kahā vakhāni hunkārī Ke hi dīna bhavāni
Umā Kahā prabhu mai gayi soyī, dekhaḥu nātha jīva Koyi hoyī
Tav Shankar chitaye dhari dhyānā, sunā vija khaga Kira sujānā
Kar trishūla lai uthe risāyī, Kira dekhi udi chalyo parāyī

TRANSLATION :

Shankara (Shiva) said : " O ! Umā, then listen to what I have to say
There are so many living beings on this mountain, how can I recite (the secret of immor-
tality)?

Whoever listens to that secret spell, Death can never come near him,
And he would become ageless and deathless, then how can I disclose that ?"
Then Girijā (Pārvati) said in sweet words : " Oh Lord ! do send away all living beings."
Then Shankara looked round, and frowned, and all beings fled in all quarters ;
All kinds of living beings, from little ants, all walked out and retired.
When the Gracious One found that the mountain was free of living beings
Then he spread his mat of tiger-skin and took his seat.
On the tree, under which Shiva, the ascetic, sat, a pair of Shuka birds were in love union,
When they flew away, the pair left behind, on the tree, a little egg.
When Shiva began to recite to Umā (Pārvati) the magic spell, the life in the egg heard the
same with attention,
As the story proceeded, the egg went on listening and it grew up, for, by that time, twelve
years had elapsed.
When Shiva gave to Umā the " Yoga-mantra " (spell of union), the egg burst its shell and
heard all that was said.
When twelve years had gone by, Girijā (Pārvati) fell asleep,
And knowing that Pārvati was asleep, the bird, from that time, started in her place, the
responsive grunts to indicate that the story was being listened to.
And thus, by-and-by the recital of Shiva came to an end, and he awakened Umā and said :
" O ! do repeat to me whatever you have heard." When he discovered gaps in the story
Shiva said in anger : " When I was relating the holy and sacred story, who was responding
to me O, Bhavāni !"
Umā said : " My Lord, I had fallen asleep. Do find out if any living being was about."
Then Shankara meditated and discovered that the Shuka bird had heard the secret,
And in a rage stood up, with the trident in his hand, the bird saw, flew out, and
vanished.

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

It is a bright afternoon in the Himalayas, the sun-set has bequeathed on the horizon a varnished sheet of living gold, on which is silhouetted the branches of a giant tree, below which the great God has spread his carpet of tiger-skin. He lifts his right hand to drink his favourite cup of *bhâng* while, his other hand rests caressingly on his consort, Pârvatī. She is lying happy on his lap intently gazing on the face of her half-witted husband. A perfect Himalayan idyll—pictured with truly lyrical intuition, depth of vision, and profound sympathy.

TEXT :

Pivata bhâng umanganame, shira Ganga virâjata yogi yotiko,
 Bukhita anga vibhûti bhare bhuja bhukana sohe bhujanga patiko ;
 Eyon Vasudebju sâje singâra sohâga sanehame Shambhu-ratiko,
 Jangha-usisapai shisa dai sundari sayon suhâvan Pârvatiko.

—Vâsudeo.



TRANSLATION :

The ascetic who carries the Ganges on his locks, drinks his cup with great gusto,
 He has decked his body with ashes, and wears for armlet the King of snakes ;
 Oh ! Vâsudev, with lot of passionate yearning she has put on her " love-dress "
 to earn an union with her Lord,
 For the lovely Pârvatī is lying on his lap, and has made his thigh her pillow.

The theme of this miniature from Kangra is the north Indian version of the Evening Dance (*sandhyā nritya*) of Shiva as the Lord of the Dance of Destruction (*Natarāja*). The scene is laid in the Himalayas in a secluded little valley screened off from the vulgar gaze and sentinelled, as it were, by a row of snow-capped peaks, which make up the rear part, so to speak, of the distinguished audience, consisting of the *Devas* (gods), *Gandharvas* (demi-gods, musicians), *Kinnaras* and the *Rishis* (the great Vedic seers), while from above heavenly beings rain down flowers in token of worship. The different groups of audiences who are qualified to witness the mystic dance are organized in rhythmic groups which seem to echo the Dancing Lord at the centre, who is skilfully posed to import a dramatic unity and cohesion to the whole composition. A very happy contrast is provided by the Lady on the throne, the *shakti*, the female energy and consort of Shiva (*Pārvatī*), here conceived as *Rāja-Rājeswarī* (the Queen of queens), the primeval spirit of Nature (*mūla prakriti*), the great symbol of *Mâyā*, the desire of all created forms, phenomenal and illusory, seated enthroned, in all her glory, surrounded by her hand-maids absorbed in herself, gazing at her own beauty in a mirror, supremely indifferent to the Dance nearby, for she is not moved by the cosmic processes, or the ceaseless change of births and re-births, which the Dance of the cosmic rhythm symbolises. Yet she is the obverse side and the co-equal of Shiva, for Life and Death co-exist and live together in close affinity in the great scheme of the universe. In contrast to the static immobility of the Lady on the throne are the dynamic gestures of all the gods—Vishnu, Sūrya (the Sun-God), Chandra (Moon), Brahmā (the four-headed one) playing on cymbals, Ganesha (the elephant-headed God) playing on his bells—supplementing the chorus of *gandharvas* and *kinnaras*,—the experts in the art of music. On the other side, one of the group of *kinnaras*, the young person with a turban is leading the evening sacrament, the “*ārati*”—waving the sacred lamp by his outstretched hand. It is rare to find in the whole history of Indian painting such a skilful translation of abstract philosophic thoughts in pictorial and picturesque language. This little miniature is a veritable piece of “*purāna*” in terms of line and colour. The Hindī verse quoted below is a very poor substitute in words of the grandeur and dramatic beauty of the pictorial composition.

TEXT :

“ Tāṇḍava gati nāchata Tripurārī I
 Deva danuja gandharva sarva mili Girijā sahita dekhata nārī ; II
 Vājata tāla mridānga jhāla ḍaph vīn vāsuri Karatārī, I
 Siddha Shanakādi savai Karajcre astuti Kare tanhā munijhārī.” II

—Vāsuḍeo.

TRANSLATION :

The enemy of the demon Tripura (i.e., Shiva) is dancing in the cadence of the *tândava* (Shiva's dance of creation),
All gods, demons and demi-gods, have assembled there to witness the dance,
with Girijâ (Shiva's wife) and her companions ;
The drum is keeping time with the cymbals, lyre and lutes, and the *karatârî* (a pair of wooden strips for keeping time),
The *siddhas* (celestial beings) and the *Rishis* such as Shanaka and all manners of ascetics join their hands in adoration.



Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

This example offers a very instructive specimen of the inner temper of Rajput Art as distinguished from the quality and character of Moghul miniatures. The formula of the perspective with its parallelograms is related to Chinese and even Persian manners; the view is conceived from a high altitude. The *dramatis personæ* are all rigged out in Moghul turbans and costumes, particularly, the chorus of musicians which is actually borrowed from the Moghul *Nakar khāna*. But in spite of these superficial and technical affinities with Moghul Art, the core and substance of its thought is indigenous Hindu sentiment. There are many examples of pictures which are technically Moghul, but absolutely inspired by Hindu thought, which have led some critics to assert, erroneously, that the Moghul and the Rajput Art were identical in expression. The episode of the Birth of Krishna occupies, in Hindu religious thought, a shrine profoundly illuminated by faith and devotion which could only evaporate with the touch of any exotic Art, however noble or accomplished in itself.

The joy and uproar in Nanda's household celebrating the birth of a son is rendered with very dramatic effect and in terms of a highly organized composition.

The Birth of Krishna, like the festival of Christmas in the Christian world, is still a religious observance and an occasion of general rejoicing in Hindu India, and is well represented in hymns and ballads, one of which is quoted below :



TEXT :

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Ham ik naī vāt suni āyī I
 Mahārī Yashodā dhotā jāyo ghar ghar vajata vadhāī II
 Dvāre bhīr gop gopinkī mahimā varani na jāyī I
 Āti ānand hōta gokulamen ratnabhūmi nidhi chhāyī II
 Nāchata tarun vriddha aru vālaka gorasa kīcha machāyī I
 Sūradās swami sukhasāgara sundara Shyāma Kanhāyī II

—“Rāga-Ratnākara,” by Bhaktarām Vyānkateswar Press Edition, p. 9.

TRANSLATION :

I have come with a piece of news today—Yashodā the herdsman's wife has got a son.

Every household is *en fête*, the glorious crowd of milkmen and milkmaids at the gate is impossible to relate.

Gokula is too full of joy, and the Earth is spread with jewels.

The dance steps of the boys and of the old and the young have made muds of the curds of milk.

Sage Sūradās finds in Kanhāī,—the lovely little black Cherub, his sea of happiness.

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

Of all the picturesque legends that popular folklores have woven round the cycle of Krishna, none is perhaps so sweetly poetical as the stories about the career of the Divine Child—the Indian Bambino—in the house of Nanda and Yashodā, wife and queen of Nanda, and the foster-mother of Krishna. The infatuation of Yashodā for the Babe of Indian Bethlehem (Vrindāvan, the birthplace of Krishna) has transcended and idealised all the love that a mother ever felt for her own child. And the love of Yashodā for the Holy Child (Gopāla-Krishna), the “little shepherd” has become typical of the idealised emotion of the mother. It is the apotheosis of this human emotion, the intensity of mother-love, that has been pictured in Indian literature and art. It has been told with consummate lyrical and imaginative skill in all classes of Vaishnava Poetry and particularly in the Hindi *Bhajan*-songs (hymns) for which many Kangra pictures furnish pictorial parallels.

TEXT :

Nanda=nandana Vrindāvan chand, I

Yaha Kahi janani jagāvata lālan jāgo more ānanda=Kand ; II

Ālāsa bhare uthe man=mohana chālata chāla thumakata ati manda, I

Ponchhi vadan anchalason yahumati ura lagāy upajyo ānanda. II

“—Rāga=Ratnākār” by Bhaktarām Vyānkateswar Press Edition, p. 26.

TRANSLATION :

“The joy of Nanda, the moon of Vrindāvan”

With these words, the mother woke up her darling,

“Open thy eyes, the source of my delight!”

The charmer of hearts woke up

And walked with slow and lazy steps,

And Yashodā wiped his face with her *sāri*'s end

And gave him her breast and felt so happy.

Author's collection.

This anecdote is one of the most charming little story of the VĀLYĀ-LĪLĀ (the Baby pranks of the Divine Childhood). It is enshrined in many songs and poems, and has inspired a glowing masterpiece from the brush of a Kangra artist. The significant curves of bending heads spell out a sense of motion and agitation which has upset all the ladies in their vain endeavour to appease the obstinate child who *will* have the Moon and nothing else. As a harmonious mosaic of colour, it is a *tour de force* of remarkable beauty. The piquant lusciousness of the faces of the ladies invests the picture with a flavour quite its own. The incident is the subject of many Hindī songs of which the following is well-known: "Dekhō Yashodāse Chānda mānge Khelanā Khāne anguri Khāne dhura vatā-vata chhin chhin lotata hai anganā". Lo! he asks of Yashodā, the Moon, for a toy, now he points up with his finger and now rolls on the dust of the yard.—(Rāmrup Dās).

TEXT :

"Leyongorimā chandā leyongo, I
Kahā-Karon jalaput bhītarko vāhīr chownki gahongo, II
Yahato jhalamalāta jhakjhorata kaise Karīju lahangō, I
Vahato nipata nikatahi dekhata varjehon na rahaungo II
Tumro prem prakata mai janyo vorāye na chahungo, I
Sūra Shyāma Kahai Kar gahi-lyayun shashitanāpā dhahungo." II

—"Sūr-Sāgara," by Sūrdās, Lucknow Edition, p. 250.

TRANSLATION :

"I will have the Moon, Mamma. I *will* have the Moon.
Of what use is it to have it on the rim of water,—for how can I pick it out of the vessel?
It is shining and shaking, O! how can I seize it?
It looks so near. Do, please, not forbid my fetching it down.
'I now know how you like the Moon but are you silly or mad',
Sūra says to Shyam (Krishna): 'I will fetch it with my hand and feel the fire of the body of the Moon.'"

Author's collection.

This anecdote is one of the most charming little story of the VĀLYA-LĪLĀ (the Baby pranks of the Divine Childhood). It is enshrined in many songs and poems, and has inspired a glowing masterpiece from the brush of a Kangra artist. The significant curves of bending heads spell out a sense of motion and agitation which has upset all the ladies in their vain endeavour to appease the obstinate child who *will* have the Moon and nothing else. As a harmonious mosaic of colour, it is a *tour de force* of remarkable beauty. The piquant lusciousness of the faces of the ladies invests the picture with a flavour quite its own. The incident is the subject of many Hindī songs of which the following is well-known: "Dekho Yashodāse Chanda mānge Khelanā Khane anguri Khane dhura vatā-vata chhin chhin lotata hai anganā". Lo! he asks of Yashodā, the Moon, for a toy, now he points up with his finger and now rolls on the dust of the yard.—(Rāmrup Dās).

TEXT :

"Leyongorimā chandā leyongo, I
Kahā-Karon jalaput bhītarko vāhir chownki gahongo, II
Yahato jhalamalāta jhakjhorata Kaise Kariju lahangō, I
Vahato nipata nikatahi dekhata varjehon na rahaungo II
Tumro prem prakata mai janyo vorāye na chahungo, I
Sūra Shyāma Kahai Kar gahi-lyayun shashitanāpa dahungo." II

—"Sūr-Sāgara," by Sūr-dās, Lucknow Edition, p. 250.

TRANSLATION :

"I will have the Moon, Mamma. I *will* have the Moon.
Of what use is it to have it on the rim of water,—for how can I pick it out of the vessel?
It is shining and shaking, O! how can I seize it?
It looks so near. Do, please, not forbid my fetching it down.
'I now know how you like the Moon but are you silly or mad',
Sūra says to Shyam (Krishna): 'I will fetch it with my hand and feel the fire of the body of the Moon.'"

PLATE XXXVIII. TOILETTE OF RÂDHÂ (JNÂTA-YOUVANÂ). SCHOOL OF KANGRA.

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

The first act of the drama of the love of Râdhâ and Krishna—is the attainment of the youth of Râdhâ—and her first consciousness of her own charms. In the canons of Indian love-poetry—the crisis is indicated in the maiden becoming conscious of her youth. In the conventional language of the rhetorician, she is indicated “as one who has come to know of her youth”—‘Jnâta=Youvanâ’ (in contradistinction to the “Nawalvâla”, the green girl).

As an artless yet passionate worship of the beauty of human form, our picture is a study of singular power and conviction.

A verse of Hanumân very charmingly describes the theme, though the words of Padmâkar offer a more accurate parallel to the picture. Both the texts appropriately render how “vital feelings of delight shall rear her form to stately height and her virgin bosom swell”—

TEXT (1) :

“Kahai Hanumân sakiyân so ðurây
Âkhiyânko nachâivo lai mukur musukâti hai
Subhare suvâsanso vâsan vanâi chârû
Ubhare urojan ko heri harkhâti hai ”

—“Sringâr-Sudhâkar ” by Hanumân.

TRANSLATION :

Says Hanumân : Away from the gaze of friends,
She rolls and dances her eyes and smiles at her picture in her mirror,
(Before) she dons her lovely scented robes,
She uncovers her breasts and watches with complaisance ”.

TEXT (2) :

“Chowkmen chowkî jarây jarâi tihipai Khari vâv vagârata soundhe,
Chhori ðhari harî Kanchukî nahânko anganate jaga jyotike Koundhe I
Chhâyî urojankî chhavi youn Padmâkar ðekhatahi chakchowundhe,
Bhâji gayî larikâi mano larikai Karikai ðuhun ðundubhi oundhe ” II

—“Jagat-vinod ” by Padmâkar Vyankateswar Press Edition, p. 11.

TRANSLATION :

On the yard is laid a jewelled chair, seated on that she is scenting her dishevelled hair
For her bath she has put off her yellow bodice and her (bare) limbs shed flashes of light,
Padmâkar says : she was surprised to look at the beauty of her developed busts,
Verily they looked like a reversed pair of drums which her girlhood dropped as she fled vanquished in her fight with her aggressive youth.

Collection of Mr. S. N. Gupta, Lahore.

'The vital feelings of delight' of the youthful damsel find appropriate expression in the pleasures of the "Swing" (*Hindorâ*.)

For sheer beauty of presentation—and tenderness and depth of feeling it would be difficult to cite, in the whole array of known Kangra miniatures, any example to rival this little masterpiece.

A theme, soaked in a rich lyricism,—is enshrined in a casket of exquisite craftsmanship in design and colour. The flavour of the sheer joy of life is contagious in the picture and is enough to make Age re-live its Youth and make Youth mad with intoxication of Life.

TEXT :

"Phûlî phûl velîsî na velî alvelî vadhû jhulâtî akeli kâmakelîsî vadhâtî hai I
Kahai Padumâkar jhamankâkî jhakaranison châron or sor KinkaniKo madhati hai II
Ura uchakây machkînakî machâmachime, langKahi lachâi châi chouguni chadhati
hai I
Rati viparîtâkî punîta paripâtî mano hauson hindorekî supâtîme padhati hai." II
"Âlijâ=Prakâsh," by Padumâkar, quoted in "Kâvyâ=Prabhâkar," p. 352.

TRANSLATION:

Swelled with elation like a shrub in flower is this damsel of sixteen, swinging to and fro as in the "Play of love-union".

Says Padumâkar : Each push sends her jingling, which fills the air with the music of her girdle,

Her busts heave as she goes up and down. Her waist dances and begets a fill of desire.

Sometimes she pictures the manner of the "Play in reverse" (*rati-viparîta*),

And sometimes of the attentive student who swings as he recites his lessons.

ÂPLATE XL. RDHÂ AND KRISHNÂ (PRATHAM MILAN LÎLÂ) SCHOOL OF KANORA.

Central Museum, Lahore.

The second act in the love drama of Râdhâ and Krishna is the First Meeting (*pratham milan*) in the village Vraja on the banks of the Jamunâ. The story is rendered with exquisite grace in a lyrical setting, which helps to a fitting apotheosis of youth and love. It is useless to parody in prose the simple yet passionate verses in which Sûradâs renders the devotee's homage to the significant incident.

TEXT :

Auchakahi dekhi tahan Râdhâ, nayan vishâl bhâl diye rori l
Nilavasan phariâ kati pahire, veni pithi rûrati jhakjhorî l
Sang ladkinî chali ita âvati, dinathorî ati chhavi tan gori
Sûr Shyâma dekhatahi rijhai, naynani mili shir parî thagori
Vujhata Shyâm "Kaun tû gori ? Kahân rahati kâkî hai veti dekhi nahî kahun
Vraja Khorî " l

"Kâheko ham vrajataji âvati khelati rahati âpanî porî l
Sunati rahati shravanani Nandâdhota karata rahata mâkhana ðadhî chori " l
"Tumro kahâ chori ham laya hain, khelana chalo sang mili jori l
Sûradâs prabhu rasika-shiromani vâtani bhurai Râdhikâ bhori." ll

Centre for "Sûrsâgar," Nawalkisor Press Edition, p. 300.

TRANSLATION :

All of a sudden Râdhâ came to fix her gaze,
Râdhâ with her large eyes and forehead,
Decked with saffron—her dress folded up on her chest and her braid dangling
on her back.
She came forward with her girl friends, the very shining picture of youthful body.
Sûra saw Shyâma (Krishna) cast passionate glances and eyes mingled with eyes,
each drawn by the other.
Shyâma asked : " Who are you fair one ? Where do you live ? Whose daughter ?
Never seen you in the streets of Vraja." " Why should I come out here ?
I play at our own gateway, have heard of a son of Nandâ
Who always steals curds and butters."
" What have I stolen from you ? Come join me in my play."
Sûrdâs interjects : My Lord (Krishna) is the wicked imp and the Prince of
Lover, for,
By his wily words, he beguiled the silly Râdhikâ.

(ĀBHISANDHITĀ) or (KĀLAHĀNTARITĀ, KUPITĀ).

Central Museum, Lahore.

Râdhâ is here delineated as the typical "*Ābhisandhitâ Nâyikâ*"—a heroine (lover) separated by a quarrel from her beloved "*Kalahântaritâ*." She is thus defined in "*Rasika Priyâ*":—

"Mân manâwata hû karai mânad ko apamân, Dûno dukha tâ vina lahai Ābhisandhitâ vakhân." "She is called Ābhisandhitâ (separated) who insults or repulses her beloved (to whom she owes her honour) at the moment he seeks to soften her pride—and suffers double sorrow when he is no longer with her." The scheme of the picture is designed to suggest an emptiness, a void called up by the blank bare walls, and the separation is actually symbolised by the intervening pillar—which cuts the two figures asunder. The lady in a cross mood is static in contrast with the moving figure of the lover. A Hindi poet, a cobbler by caste, has furnished an appropriate commentary on the picture:—

TEXT:

Āye Lalâ Kahunte grihamen jinke mai umangamai mân dihhâyo I
Ruthikai thâde bhaye itnepai tau ^{o na hi} unhe kar thâmbhi vithâyo II
Kâhakahun apnî matiko Chiranjivju pritamko na manâyo I
Lâjke Kâj arî sajanî, apne anurâgme dâg lagâyo. II

—"Lachmisvara-vilâs" by Chiranjiv, quoted in Kāvya Prabhâkar, p. 204.

TRANSLATION:

When Lâlâ (Krishna) came to my room from one of his love-haunts, I greeted him
with a pretty hot temper.
And this made him stand up angry, but alas! I did not stretch my hands to
make him sit.
Oh Chiranjiv! how shall I curse my foolish thoughts, I refrained from appeasing
my beloved,
Oh my comrade! Out of bashfulness (vanity) and temerity I have sullied the
purity of my passion.

Central Museum, Lahore.

Here Rādhā is pictured as the type of the "Swādhīna Patikā" of the "Proudhā" (mature) class. She is the type of heroine ("nāyikā"), "by whose virtues her Lord is loyally attached and remains ever with her". By the charm of her virtues he is held in complete subjection and is made "to follow close the chariot of her desire". She is generally delineated in pictures—as seated with her lover massaging her feet, or painting her breasts with paste, or decking her face with saffron—as in the example here. In Bengali Vaishnava songs she is represented, (on the morning following the union overnight), as being attended to by her husband who finishes her toilette for her, so that people may not know of her nocturnal carousal. The anecdote is technically known in Vaishnava hymns as "*Kunja Bhanga*" (the breaking of the bower, the rendezvous for the night). When the lovers part at daybreak Govindāśa, the Bengali poet, has an exquisite sonnet:—

TEXT :

Hari nija ānchare Rāi mukha muchhayi, Kunkume tanu puna māji I
 Ālakā tilakā deyi sinthi vanāwala chikure Kavari puna sâji II
 Sindūra dewala sinthe,
 Katahun yatana kari urapara lekhañi Mrigamaḍa chitrakā pānte
 Manimanjira charane parāwala urapara dewala hārā I
 NayanaKa anjana Karala suranjana chivukhañi mrigamaḍa vinḍu
 Charana=Kamala=tala yāvaka lekhañi ki Kahava Dāsa Govinda II
 —Govinda Dāsa.

TRANSLATION :

Krishna brushed Rādhā's face with the end of his scarf and rubbed her body with saffron.
 He put the sandal marks again on her forehead, tied up her chignon—and put the vermilion spot afresh on her forehead.
 Then he painted, with intense passion, various designs on her breasts, with musk, and put the jewel-set anklets round her feet and the necklace, round her neck.
 He touched her eye-lashes with collyrium and put a tiny dot on her chin, and painted her lotus feet with lac=dye,
 And (the poet) Govinda Dāsa was speechless with ecstasy.

The Hindi version is furnished by the following verses:—

TEXT :

Phūlanson vālkī vanāy guñi venī lāl bhāl dāi vāinḍī mrigamaḍakī asita hai I
 Bhāntī bhāntī bhūKhan vanāye vraja=bhūKhan suvirī nija Karson Khavāi Kari hita hai II
 Hwaikāi rasvas lāla lai hai mahāvariko ḍiveko nihāri rahe charana lalita hai I
 Chūmi hāth nāhake lagāi rahī ānkhinson eho prān-nāth yaha ati anuchita hai II
 —"Kāvya-Pravākara," Bombay Edition, p. 220.

TRANSLATION :

Having made up his girl's braid with flowers, Lâl (Krishna) put a dot on her forehead with black musk

The Jewel of Vraja (Krishna) put on her, all manners of Jewels and himself made up a betel drenched in passion and made her chew it.

Lâl (Krishna) took the lac-dye in his hand, and gazed and gazed at her beautiful feet longing to colour them

She quickly caught his hands and Kissed them and placed them on her eyes and screamed : ' My love, and Lord of my Life, this is not worthy of you '!



Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

(VARSA=VIHARA.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

In the poetic convention of old Indian love-lore the enjoyment of love has its own appropriate form for every season, very well indicated in Kâlidâs's "Ritu-samhâra".

The Hindi lyrics have their vernacular parallels to the old classic poetry. And Varsâ-Vihâra, the "Enjoyment in Rain," is one of them. Applied to the love of Râdhâ and Krishna the scene is laid in the noonday pasture, where Râdhâ is represented as meeting Krishna in the company of his flock of cows and his cow-herd comrades. A sudden heavy shower drives all to part company and every member of the group seeks improvised shelter leaving the happy pair in close company under a common cloak. "*Ghana Shyâm aur Râdhe, vinoda-bhare rahe ekahi kamrime satkai*" "The dark-complexioned one" (Krishna) and Râdhâ out of dalliance, remain locked inside one and the same cover (blanket).'

(Vâsudeo "Ananga- priyâ.")

As a Nature-piece exquisitely painted, with a poignant sense of sympathy with human love, the presentation is almost unrivalled. The very leaves of the trees, lashed to life by the refreshing shower of rain, are the significant timage of the intoxication of the lovers in embrace. A very passionate Hindi lyric echoes the *motif* of the picture with remarkable fidelity.



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TEXT:

Nita châtaka châyason volo karai, muravânako sora suhâvana hai I
Chamaktai chapalâ chahun chav chadhî ghana ghora ghatâ varsâvana hai II
Palakau papihâ na rahô chupa hai, aru pauna chahûn dishi âwana hai I
Mili piyârî piyâ lapatai chhatiyân sukhako sarasâwana sâwana hai. II

—"Kâvya-Pravâkar," Bombay edition, p. 350.

TRANSLATION:

The "châtaka" (cuckoo) every minute shrieks (sweetly) out of joy,
The voice of the peacock is no less sweet.
The lightning flashes from all the four quarters,
And the thick black clouds have started pouring.
The voice of 'Pâpiyâ' (hawk-cuckoo) for a moment is not still,
And gales from all quarters rush in,
The lover and the beloved, with their breasts to breasts, do meet,
(For), Sâwana (i.e., July) is the month which soaks all up and makes happiness
happy.

Collection of Tihri-Gharwal Durbar.

This exquisite little miniature with its sharply contrasted colour scheme is in many ways unique, particularly in its charmingly rendered night effect. A realistic rendering of chiaroscuro was perhaps imported into Rajput Painting from the practices of Moghul school, and various examples of night effect with its mystery and richly designed contrast are frequently met with in Rajput Painting. Three other examples are illustrated in Plates XXVI, XXVII and LII. The dress of the old man, Nanda, at the left corner, so aggressively Moghul, may easily tempt the unwary to mistake the picture as the product of a Moghul artist. But the whole treatment, with its passionate lyricism, depth and mystery, bears the real stamp of a Rajput artist.

It is an illustration of the opening invocation in the "Gīta Govinda," the Song of Songs, the famous masterpiece of the Bengali poet Jayadeva, who flourished at the Court of Lakṣmanasena (circa 1119 A.D.). It is a quasi dramatic composition divided into twelve chapters of songs which are set to music, and have, by the remarkable beauty of form and diction and the skilful blending of sound to sense, attained great popularity throughout India. Many illustrations of the "Gīta Govinda" by the Pāḥārī artists are known and prove the popularity of the Bengali poem in the distant corners of India. The subject-matter of the poem is the rendering of all varieties of love-emotion, pictured in the story of the estrangement of Krishna from his beloved Rādhā—the longing, the return of the lover, and the final union—the charm of the lyrical exposition being exquisitely set forth against the background of the beauty of Nature with which the love-story is skilfully intermingled.

Our picture illustrates the first verse of "Gīta Govinda," the Sanskrit text of which, together with a Hindi version, appears on the fly-leaf cover of the picture :—

TEXT :

Meghair meḍuram amvaram vanabhuvah shyāmāstmāla=drumair
Naktam bhīrurayam twameva tadimam Rādhē grham prāpaya. I

TRANSLATION :

"The Sky is clouded, and the wood resembles the Sky, thick=arched with black
Tamāla bough
O Rādhā, Rādhā! take this soul, that trembles in life's deep midnight, to Thy
golden house."
So Nanda spoke, and, led by Rādhā's spirit, the feet of Krishna found the road
aright.

—(Sir Edwin Arnold.)

[See back.

HINDI TEXT :

“Nandā Rādhā ki boltā hai :

He Rādhā tu dhāhi yeha Krishna ghare Ki Pujasa yehā rāti dartaāhi

Meghe Kariyā ākasa purna ahe tamāla vricchādi chhāya Kari vana bhūmi
yehansebhi shyām hai.”

The substance of the Hindi text is practically the same as the Sanskrit text quoted and translated above.



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PLATE XLV. GĀICHARAN LĪĀ—(TENDING OF COWS). SCHOOL OF KANGRA.

Collection of Mr. S. N. Gupta, Lahore.

This picture and the next appear to be related by an identity of decorative devices and of the general treatment of the personages figuring in the pictures. They may have been from the same brush. The theme is a very interesting episode in the daily routine of Krishna, the cowherd. In the intervals of tending the cows, Krishna was never loathe to pay attention to Rādhikā. And in one of such escapades he was interrupted one day by the sudden visit to the meadows of Nanda and Yashodā,—who were very much upset in missing their pet child. Krishna appeared in his *alter ego* to appease the anxiety of his dotting parents. He is seen between the outstretched arms of Nanda receiving the caress of his mother,—while his other self is seen at the further end of the picture in a passionate embrace with his sweetheart, very tactfully camouflaged by the cover of sympathetic trees. The following verses picture the theme in words :

TEXT :

Gāy charāwat gopa=sakhā mili Kunjaname bhari chitta ucchāñhi I
Rādhikā Shyām cchipai kahun jāyakai keli karai dou dai garvāñhi II
lyon Vasudveju etenme Nanda vāvā liye gowāliniyān ākulāñhin I
Dākata āya gayo manmohan dourike vegi rahai gahi vāñhin. II

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Vāsudeo.

TRANSLATION :

(While) Tending the cows in the woody glades with His cowherd companions,
with His heart full of passion and gusto,
Shyāma (Krishna) slipped away with Rādhā and, locked in each other's embrace,
played the game of love.

In the meantime, says Vāsudeo, it so happened, that Father Nanda and the
cowherd maids missed Him and in anxiety looked for Him.

When called out, Krishna ran up and stood holding his father's arm.

Vāsudeo.

(The Quelling of the Serpent Kālīya.)

Museum of Fine Art, Boston.

This heroic anecdote is a very favourite theme with the Pahari painters. Of many extant versions, the one, here reproduced, is perhaps the best in conception as in execution. The picture is skilfully divided into two organized groups : One inside the pool, where Krishna stamps his foot on the head of the Dragon, balanced by skilfully disposed groups of the plaintive wives of the snake, who, by the flowing lines of the curves of their body, contribute not a little to the movement and animation of the scene. The group on the bank representing the parents and friends of Krishna are strung together in a closely knitted crowd all united in one idea, viz., anxiety for the safety of Krishna, indicated by their wild gestures. The curve of the bank of the lake offers a very graceful but effective division of the two sections of the picture of two divergent dramatic uses. The trees and the cows make a landscape of idyllic peace and refinement. The two parts of the pictures are accurately repeated by appropriate texts quoted below :—

TEXT (No. 1):

Vraja=vāsī sav bhai bihālī
 Kān Kān Kahi terata hai, vyākula gopi gowālī
 ĀvaKo vasaye jāy Vraja Hari vinu dhik jiwana naranārī II
 Tum vinu eha gati bhai savaniki Kāhān gaye vanawārī. II

—“Sūr Sāgara,” Nawalkissore Press Edition, p. 351.

TRANSLATION :

The dwellers of Vraja are all upset.
 The cowherds and the maids are in despair crying out for “Kān, Kān” (Kānu = Krishna).
 “Who will go back to live in Vraja without Hari
 Life is not worth living for all men and women
 Without you everybody is in this plight
 Where have you gone, Oh ! Vanwārī (Krishna) ?”

TEXT (No. 2):

Sahasa phana prati nirta Kīno thei thei shavḍa uchārānī
 Kar jor nāgin Karata stuti Kutum sahita utha dhāyiyānī
 Nātha ava aparādha Kshamā Kar Kripā hama pati pāyiyān. II

—“Rāg-Ratnākara,” Bombay Edition, p. 46.

TRANSLATION:

He danced on its thousand hoods, punctuating, by yells, each stamp of the foot.
The serpent's wives with their friends came and joined their hands in prayers :
“ O ! Lord, pray excuse his sins and take pity on us !”



Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts

Collection of Mr. P. C. Manuk, Patna.

Of all seasonal festivals observed in Northern India none is older and more popular than the Carnival of Colours (Horī-Līlā), the great Indian Saturnalia of Spring, known as the Dola-Yātrā, or the Holi Festival. When Vaishnavism and the cult of Krishna absorbed the primitive spring festival and made it its own, it honoured all the features of the primitive Love-festival; Krishna, the Indian Eros, being very appropriately regarded as the Incarnation of Love—and, interpreted as a social *līlā* or sport or incident in the idylls of sportive Krishna in the meadows of Vrindāvan—it became the sacred *Dola-Līlā* or the *Horī-Līlā*, of the Krishna cult, invested with a peculiar mystery and dignity but preserving all the elements of primitive seasonal festivals.

Of all versions of the *Horī-Līlā* so frequently illustrated by the Kangra artists, our illustration here offers some very peculiar features. There is a curious sense of peace and serenity in the temper of the design which is rather opposed to the characteristic phase of animation generally associated with them. In spite of the crossing jets of red liquid discharged from the opposite sides, there is a peculiar lack of movement in the figures. And the ladies, headed by Rādhā, are standing motionless transfixed, as it were, by the approach of Krishna, anxiously but quite composedly, expecting the solemn sacrament. There is a mysterious sadness in the intense gaze of Krishna himself as he contemplates Rādhikā graciously awaiting, with joint palms, the honour of the crimson spray. All the figures are pervaded with an uniform seriousness, almost amounting to sadness—intent on performing a solemn and sacred ceremony, rather than a festival of merry-making. The Hindi text quoted below is by an anonymous poet :

TEXT :

Utate Kanhāi larikāi sakhā linhe sang Kari chātūrāyī Keli horīkī machāyī hai I
Ita Vrikabhānakī Kumārī sukhmārī piārī āligana ālime rasālīsī suhāyī hai II
Lālan gulālankī lālanpay dārain mūthī chalai pichakārī sukha-Kārī dūhun dhāyī hai I
Kesar suranga sāne neha sarasāne dārai māno varasāne varasāne jhari lāyī hai. II

Quoted in Kāvya-Prabhākara, Bombay Edition, p. 333.

TRANSLATION :

One on one side, Kanhāi (Krishna), with his group of young friends is busy showing his skill in playing his spout.

On the other side, the daughter of Vrikavānu, the Fair and Beloved one (Rādhikā) shines in the midst of her chosen friends—all adepts in the art of Love (rasavati).

Says Lālan : The girls cast handful of dust of red on Lālan (Krishna). The syringes in their happy flow play on both sides and pour the mixture of saffron and *āvir* (red powder) for augmenting the passion of love, like continued showers in Varasāne (a village in Vraja) in the season of rain.

Collection of Mr. Arthur B. Davies, New York.

This is perhaps one of the earliest representative of the Kangra school. Though yet lacking the refined maturity and organization of the later pictures it carries all the best qualities of the Kangra school. In its naïve sincerity and depth of feeling, it easily takes precedence over all later pictures with greater claim for persuasive charm and technical perfection. A somewhat unromantic page from the daily life of a forester is transcended by the vision of the artist to a higher plane, and the treatment accorded is akin to religious reverence. The daily life of Rāma in his self-imposed renunciation in the eyes of the devotees, attains the halo of sanctity which is somewhat difficult to realise without sharing the feeling, which the incidents in the great Indian *Saga* (Rāmāyana) have for centuries evoked in the Indian mind. The story is simple. Lakshmana, the faithful companion of his brother in his exile, goes out to hunt every morning and returns, as we see him in the picture, with his game. The third figure is Sītā, the devoted wife, receding in the background, a picture of bashfulness and tenderness, in the singular artlessness of her pose. To supplement this somewhat meagre group of human beings, the artist introduces the trees and creepers, heavily laden with flowers, which quite emphatically, though reverently, tender homage on behalf of the artist and carry the devotee's offering to the god in human flesh and blood—Rāmā, the incarnation of divinity, the hero who renounced a kingly crown to honour the promise of his father. The picture is a veritable hymn—a worshipper's tribute to his god.



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TEXT :

“ Jānakī sātḥ lai Jānakī-nāṭh ḍharai ḍhanu ḥānth manojā lajāye I
Tāpasa bhes Kasai Kachḥani Kati anganme Kaphani lapatāye II
Āge Khāde vanme Vasuḍeo Kāhai urame ati neḥa vadḥāye I
Lakhana lāla vatāvata Rāmako ḥamḥim mrigā ek māriḱe lāye. II ”

—Vāsuḍeo.

TRANSLATION :

The Lord of Jānakī (Sītā) has brought her (Sītā) with him and in his pose, with a bow in his hand, puts the picture of cupid to shame,
Dressed (though he is) as an ascetic, rigged out in leaves and barks fastened all round his body,
Vasuḍeo points out, with love and devotion full in his heart, to dear Lakshmana as he speaks to Rāma of the deer that he has shot, which he offers to Rāma.

PLATE XLIX. CHĪRĀ-HARĀNĀ (STEALING OF CLOTHES). RĀJPUT-MOGHUL.

India Office, London.

The theme of the picture is the very well-known episode in the "sports" or pranks (līlā) of Krishna known as the "*Chīra-harana-līlā*," "The stealing of clothes." The herd-maids, who had undertaken the religious fast known as the Gaurī-vrata, with the avowed intention of winning the divinity (Krishna) as their "bridegroom" as the result of their devotion, went into the river for a purificatory bath. Ever since Gaurī (Parvatī) won her wished for husband by her well-known penances, Shiva has always been worshipped in India by unmarried girls, as the benign god who can give them mates after their own heart. And the Gaurī-vrata prescribes the ritual for the fast by which the merit and grace of Shiva can be procured. According to the Vaishnavite creeds, one cannot attain one's divinity unless one can train one's self to surrender all that is considered most precious. And Krishna proceeded to test the devotion of those who had taken the vow of winning the "god" as their chosen Lord. "*Yehai kahati pati dehu, Vmāpati, Giridhara Nandakumār.*" They prayed: Oh! Shiva, give me, for my husband, the son of Nandā, i.e., Krishna. He stole their clothes which he spread on the Kādamva tree, and would not give them back unless they prayed for their return. This meant the surrender of their modesty—the most precious virtue of all maidens. But, "God's in his heaven—and all's right with the world". The merits of their devotion bore their fruit, and they attained their divinity. And the theme is here translated in terms of a lyrical interpretation of extreme charm and vigour. Several interpretations of this episode have survived, but our example surpasses all in a depth of conviction and a power of design of rare decorative quality. The symbolism of the merit of the devotees bearing fruit is rendered with a naive realism, which pictures the tree in an intensely decorative scheme which figures the 'fruits' as a physical symbol of a spiritual realisation, almost echoing the words of Sūradās.

TEXT:

Vasan hare sav Kādam chadhāye |
Sūra hansi hansi gopa-kanyānikē abhūkhana sahita churāye |
Āti-vistāra nīpataru tāme lai lai jāhān tāhān latakāyo |
Mani ābharani dāra dāra prati dekhata chhavi manahin atakāyo |
Nīlāmvar pītāmvar sārī sweta pīta chunarī arunāyo |
Sūr-Shyāma yuvatina vrata-pūranko phal Kādam-dāra phala-lāyo" ||

—"Sūr-Sāgara," Nawalkisore Edition, p. 372.

TRANSLATION:

Says Sūra: "He smiled gracefully as He stole all the clothes and jewels and ornaments of the cowherd-maids,
And took them up the Kādamva tree.
It was a big tree with spreading branches on which He hung them up at all places,

And fixed His mind and gaze on the beauty of jewels and trinkets as they hung
from the branches
With the clothes and "Sâris" of all kinds of colour—blue and yellow, and white
and rose.

Sûra says : " Shyâma (Krishna) as if to fulfil the vows of the young girls, inspired
the branches to bear fruits."

The vision and presentation of the subject is entirely in the spirit of the Rajput painter—
though the elaborate use of shades and the sense of solidity bespeak the realistic manners of
Moghul technique. The tactile values impart a vividness to the composition which is
somewhat remote from the rarefied and refined atmosphere of a true Kangra picture.



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Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The illustrated manuscript of *Rasika-priyā* (lit., the favourite of those who understands the passion, or flavour of Love) is almost unique in the history of mediæval Indian Painting. It represents a contact between Rajput and Moghul Art—an interesting cultural union between two divergent, if not contradictory, poles of thought. The work itself, an authoritative treatise in Hindi on erotics and literary analysis, is, of course, purely “Hindu,” having nothing to do with the exotic culture of the Moghul Court. It is a psychological dissection of the sentiment of love under various conditions and moods, and proceeds to a detailed classification of heroes (‘*nāyaks*’) and heroines (‘*nāyikās*’) according to their circumstances, age, moods and emotions. It, of course, follows the footsteps of the traditional erotics of old Sanskrit poetry, but illustrates the emotions with considerable insight and in terms of actual experience. But when we come to examine the language of the illustrations to this text, we find that it has discarded the technique of Rajput Painting and is speaking through the formula of the Art of the Moghul Court. Not only are the types rigged out in contemporary Moghul costumes, but the environment and furnitures and the general treatment follow the manners of the Moghul artist. The suggestion for modelling and relief and the realistic treatment of trees, bespeak of the brush of the Moghul studio. The illustrations, therefore, stand on very nearly the same footing as the illustrations of the *Mahābhārata* by the artists of Akbar’s Court. If we consider the history of this MSS., this is exactly what one should expect. For the work may have been originally composed in the very atmosphere of the Moghul Court. It is said that the author, a poet of the Court of Indrajit Shah of Bundelkund, visited Delhi in order to intercede on behalf of his patron and to restore him to royal favour, the relations between the Prince and the Moghul Court having been somewhat strained. It appears the poet, through the instrumentality of Rājā Birbal, himself a gifted poet and a patron of Hindi literature, succeeded in obtaining the necessary amnesty for his patron. And the work in question, actually dated 1591 A.D., may have been composed during his visit to Delhi, or possibly this illustrated edition was prepared on the occasion, in order to procure the favours of Akbar whose interest in Hindi literature is very well known. By the scheme of the text, each mood or sentiment is defined and then illustrated by an actual example of which the picture at the bottom of the page is a pictorial counterpart. Thus the theme of our first illustration Plate L (A) is an exposition of *Duhsandhāna rasa*, i.e., the flavour of what is hard to reconcile: “*Yeka hoyi anukūla jahan dūjo hai pratikūl, Keshava duhsandhāna rasa shobhita tahān samul.*” “When one is in a willing (gracious) mood, and the other, in a cross mood and an unfavourable attitude, that is, says Keshava, the flavour of what is hard to reconcile, happily and fully illustrated.” The idea is demonstrated in a very amusing dialogue in which Krishna intercepts a milk-maid on her way to the market and asks a gift of curd from her, who refuses with charming sarcasm:—

[See back

TEXT :

Dai ðaðhi ðino uðharaḥo Keshava ðân Kahâ aru mola lai Khai hain I
 Ðino vinâ ju gaî hogai na gai na gai gharahi phiri jai hain II
 Go hitu vair Kiyo Kav ho hi tu varû Kiye varaniki hai rai hain I
 Vairû Kai goras vechahugi aho vechyo na vechyo to ðhari naðai hain. II

—“Rasika-priyâ,” Vyankateswar Press Edition, p. 188.

TRANSLATION :

“Are you not *giving* me some curd ?” “Shall I *give* you free, Oh, Keshava ?”
 “Where is the *gift* if I pay for and drink it ?”
 “Am I going to let you go and sell, without giving me some ?”
 “If I am not allowed to go, then I do not go, I go back home.”
 “Do you wish to quarrel for curd ?” Since *when* are we friends :
 If we quarrel, I do not care.”
 “Could you sell curds if you quarrel with me ?”
 “Oh ! Whether I sell or not, I do not give you a drop, without price.”

PLATE L (B).

RASIKA-PRIYÂ.

RAJPUT-MOGHAL.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The subject of the second illustration is “Proudhâ ðhirâ” who is thus defined :
 “Âðara mânjh anâðare, pragata Kare hita hoyi, Akriti apu ðurâvai proudhâ ðhirâ ðoyi,”
 “When her cross mood, covered by pretended acts of courtesy and welcome, reveals her lack
 of love in the midst of her poses of love—such is “proudhâ ðhirâ.” The mood is illustrated
 in the picture of Râðhâ giving a pretended welcome to Krishna with elaborate ceremonials to
 cover her real feeling.

TEXT :

Âwata ðekhi laye uthi âgehun âpahi Keshava âsana ðino I
 Âpuhi pâvin pakhâri bhale jalapânko vâjânu lâyi navino II
 Viri vanâikâi âge ðhari so javai Hariko var vijana lino I
 Vâñha gahi Hari eso kaheo hansiyê tou ito abarâðhan Kîno II

—“Rasika-priyâ,” Vyankateswar Press Edition, p. 41.

TRANSLATION :

Seeing him come she goes forward and welcomes him and herself fetches a seat
 for Keshava (Krishna)
 Having with her own hands washed his feet, fetches a new pot for his drink
 She makes up the betel-leaves for chewing and places them in front,
 And, presently, when she picks up the beautiful fan to give him a little breeze
 He caught her by the arm and ardently said : “Won't you smile ? Oh, do smile I
 pray !”

Collection F. Sarre, Esq., Berlin.

This is another example in which the Rajput and the Moghul manners meet in a curious medley. Happily it misses the banality of a cross-breed and the whole effect is charming though a little less convincing, and lacking the intensity of a pure Rajput picture. This is amply compensated by the rich decorative flavour introduced by the conventionalised tree of which every leaf is a flower and which afford wonderful balance to the whole composition. The principal Moghul elements are furnished by the row of conventional flowering plants in the foreground and the figure of the lady with the garland which is borrowed from the type familiar in Moghul pictures. But it is impossible to find precedents for the thrice-bent (trivanga) sway and the attitude and gesture of the figure in any Moghul painting.

An eminent critic has described such pictures as "Moghul based on Rajput." To many the substance and core of such picture, the groundwork, appears purely Rajput put into the technique of a Moghul frame. The sincerity of sentiments and the intensity of the passionate motif, shared and echoed by the "animated" tree, is absolutely foreign to Moghul manners. In the present example the Moghul element is less aggressive and the picture has been aptly characterised as Râjasthâni with slight Moghul influence.

The Kakubhâ Râginî is thus pictured in the Hindi Texts.

TEXT :

Sabhaiyâ:

Vithurî alakain ânkhiyân lalakain ðuti jovankî jhalkain tanmain I

Pata Kesariyâ ubharî chatiyân ðarakî angiyâ parirambhana main II

Sav rain jâgî pala nâhin lagî chhalson Kari mît thagî vanmain I

Pika=vola sune ðukha pâvati hai Kukubhâ tiya rovatî Kunjanamain II

Kâvyapravâkar, Znð mayûkha p. 101:

TRANSLATION :

Her hairs dishevelled, her eyes anxiously looking round, the beauty of youth
flashes in her body

Her cloth (sâri) is of yellow colour, her busts exposed, her bodice, torn by embraces
She is awake all night, not having a wink of sleep, her friend (lover) by wiles has
enticed her into the woods

She is very much upset by the voice of the Cuckoo, such is Lady Kukubhâ, weeping
in the bower.

(see back)

This musical mode appears to be the personification of the sentiment of a lady, who has been enticed into the woods by her lover, who, after dalliance, has deserted her. The signs of dishevelled hair, her garland removed from her neck, etc., indicate the stage after the union (*suratānta*). Being deserted she is also a *virahini* (a separated heroine), the pangs of whose heart are aggravated by the songs of the cuckoo which is supposed, in the convention of love poetry, to stimulate love-longings.



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Author's collection.

Even in India; historical personages seldom put on the halo of romance, or the rainbow colour of fairy tales. Yet this is exactly what has happened in the case of Baz Bâhâdur, the chief of Malwa, and his infatuation for Rûpamati, his queen, who was formerly a Hindu dancing girl whom he married. The love-story of this royal pair has become a matter of folk-legend, with just such a note of exaggeration which carries it to the idealised planes of the story of Hîr and Ranjâ, Sohni and Mohinwal, or Yusuf and Zuleikha. It is said that the royal lover would never be weary of drinking the rich voice of her songs for days together, and all engrossed in his love could not bear a moment's separation. At night they would often ride out together, side by side, to hunt, like another Vivien and Merlin, as we see them in our picture, a love-sick pair gazing at each other with eyes meeting eyes (*châr-chasm*) for ever and for ever. Akbar's victorious arm put an end to this love romance, leaving a memory which developed into a folk-legend. The Great Moghul captured his principality and took him prisoner with the result that Rûpamati poisoned herself to escape being taken to Delhi.

The story must have inspired many artists, for quite a series of pictures, depicting the incident of the nocturnal hunts, has survived. The night scene with its chiaroscuro is sometimes emphasized by some artists by the introduction of a torch carried by a retainer in front of the royal riders. In our picture, which is a strange mixture of Rajput and Moghul manners, the realistic presentation of a night scene is hardly resorted to. In spite of a fair amount of modelling and relief in the treatment of the face, a flat effect is sought with a strong decorative motif. A strong and very effective colour contrast is obtained by placing the rich colouring of the figures against a dark background afforded by the night scene. The lavish use of gold and the realistic treatment of drapery strictly follow the technique of Moghul painters. But the manner of approach and the presentation of the theme, particularly the idealised formula of the faces with the arched eyebrows and schematic eyes, recall the habits of a Rajput brush. The introduction in the foreground, of a fragment of a tank with lotuses and cranes—is a familiar Rajput convention. Nominally Moghul in technique, the picture is wholly Rajput in feeling and temper. The words of Vasudeo describe the scene in Hindî couplets :

TEXT :

Vir gambhîr vadê dou dhîr
Kasai Kati chîrko phent sambhâren
Sweta Suranga turanga chadhâi
Kara châpa nikhangâ katimaha dhâre
Jâte âherî ânherî nisâme
Duhû mukha pherike phera nihâre
Bâja Bahâdur Rûpamatiko
Lagae tak nain tare nehi târe

—“Vasudeo.”

TRANSLATION :

[They are] a very brave pair and grave,
Their dress tucked up and fastened round the waist,
Riding horses white and prettily dyed
Carrying bows in hand with arrows at the waist
Going out to hunt in the darkness of the night
Turning their faces and looking at each other
[They are] Baṣ Bāhādur and Rūpamati
Whose steadfast eyes met but refused to turn away

—“Vasudeo.”



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PLATE I.

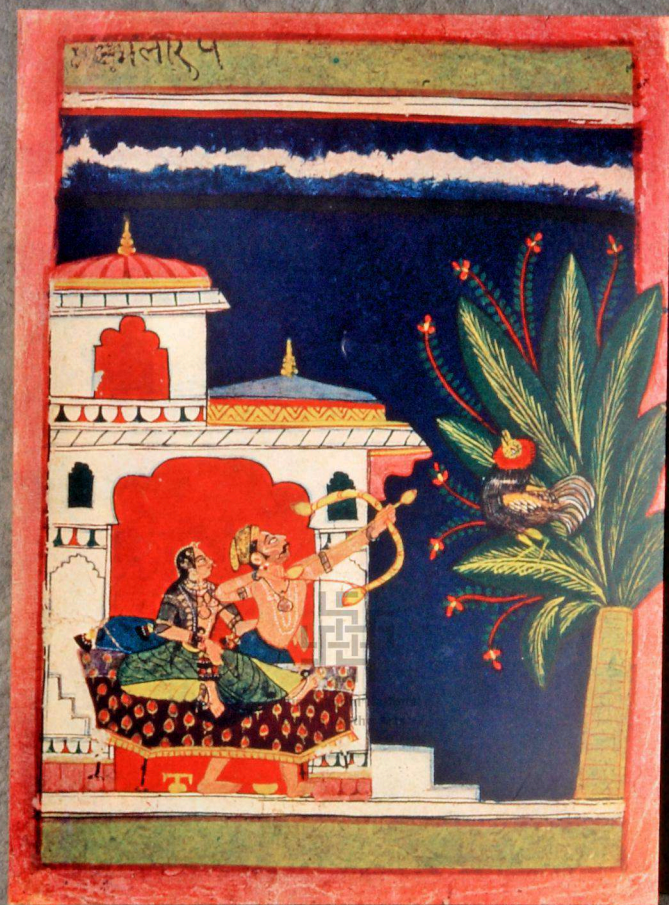


RĀGINĪ BANGĀLĪ



RĀGINĪ BHĀIRAVĪ

PLATE III.



RĀGINI VIBHĀSA

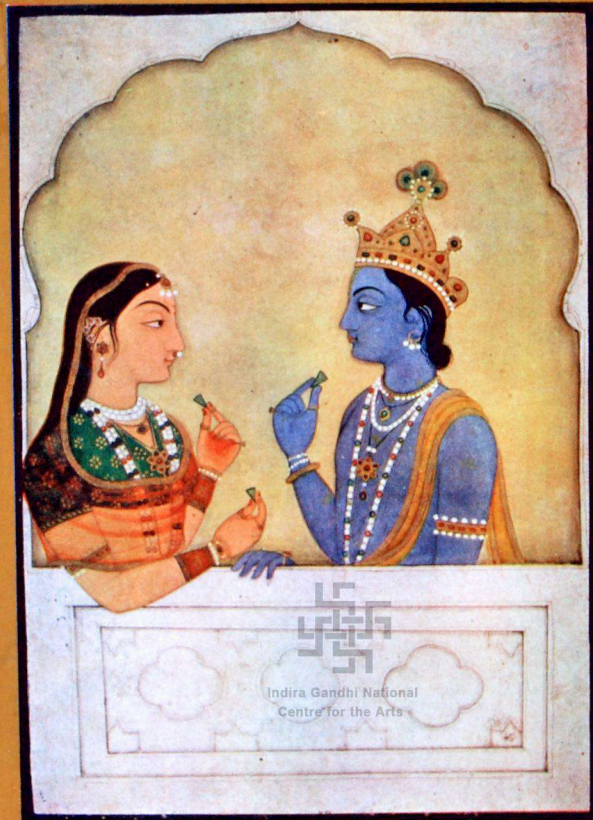
PLATE IV.



RĀGINĪ SĀRANGĪ.



PLATE VIII

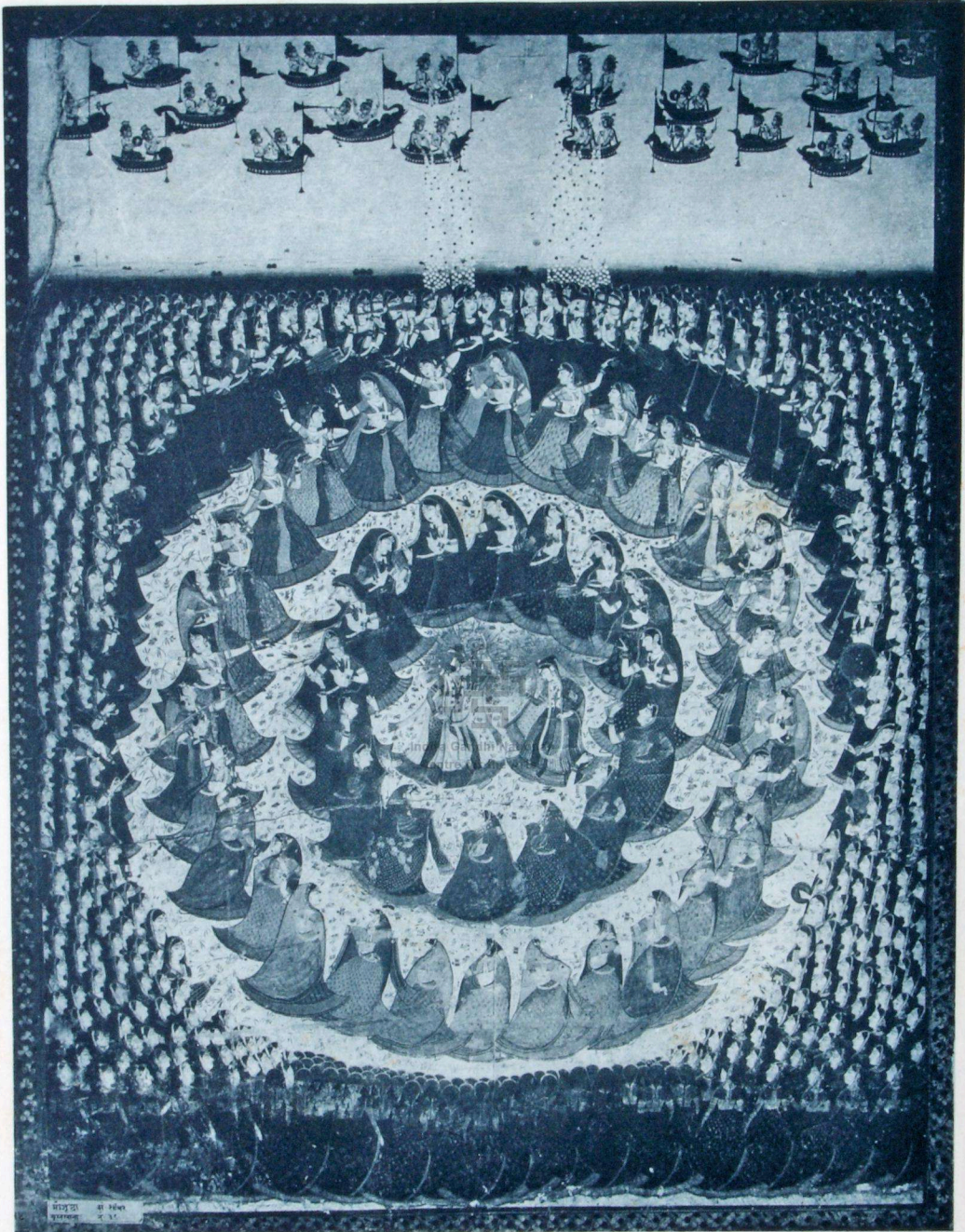


TĀMṡULA-SEVĀ

PLATE IX.



ĀGATA-PATIKĀ



RÂSA MANDALA

PLATE XI

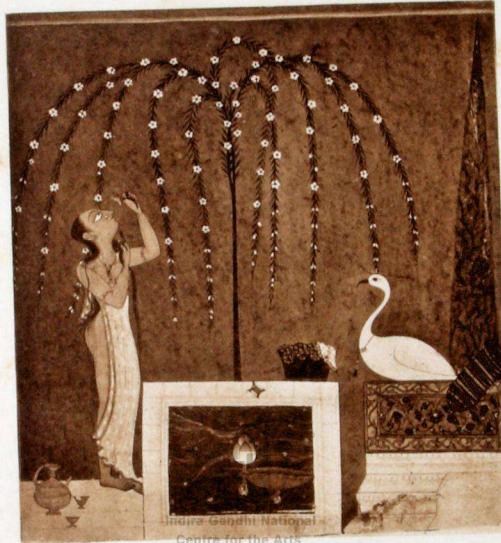


DANCING KRISHNA



MAHARAJA PRATAP SINGH

PLATE XIII



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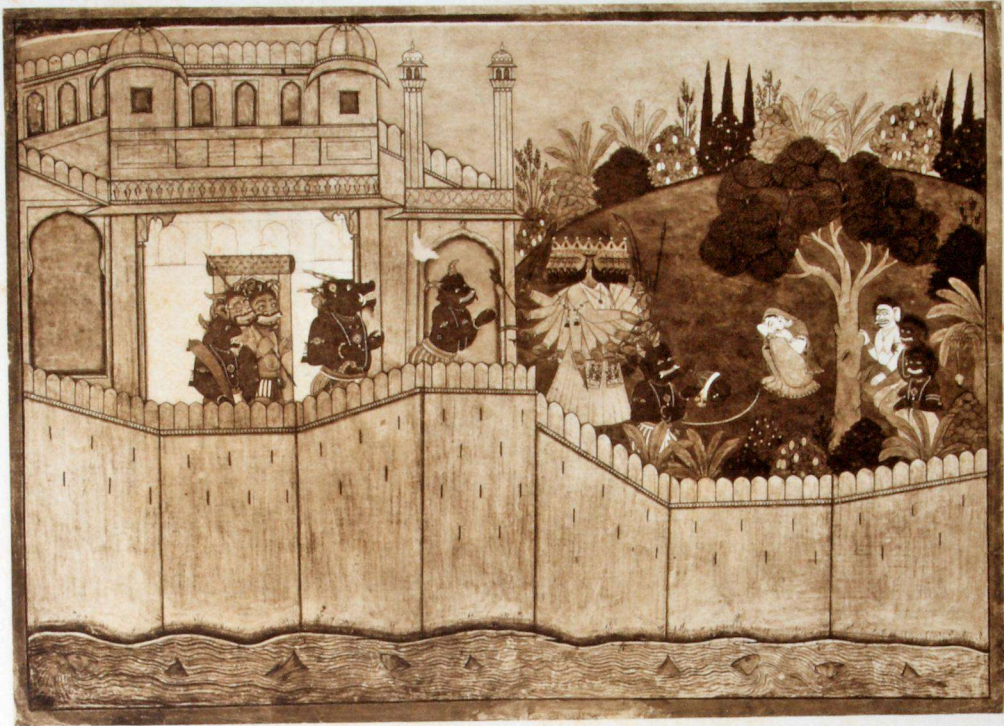
A LADY'S BATH.



KRISHNA & THE COWS



SIEGE OF LANKĀ



SIEGE OF LANKĀ



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SIEGE OF LANKĀ



PLATE XVIII.



THE DEER FIGHT.

PLATE XIX.



FLOWER GATHERING.



KRISHNA & THE GOPIS.

PLATE XXI.



RĀGINĪ SHĀVIRĪ.





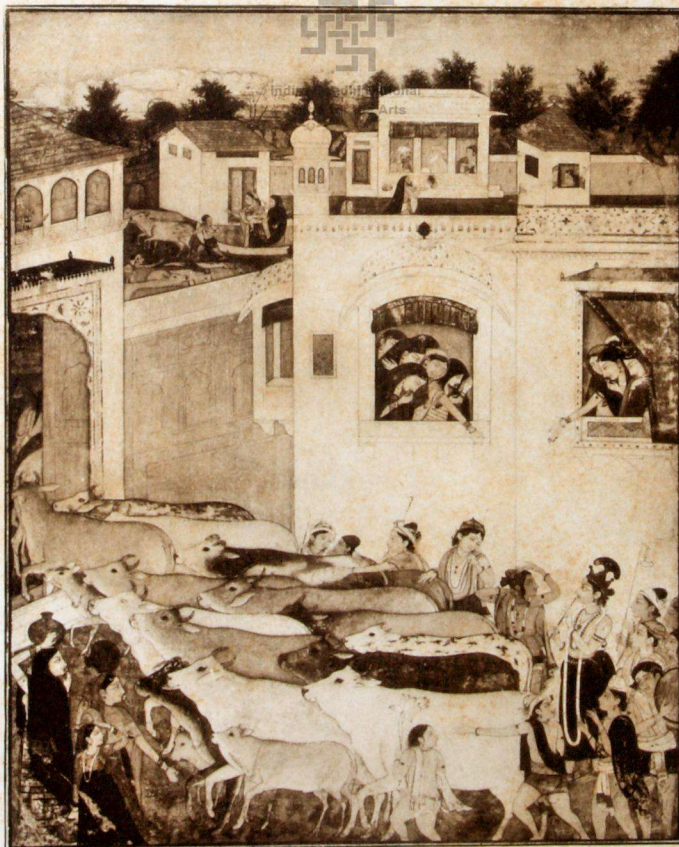
RAJA PRAKĀSH CHĀND.



SHÎTA-VIHÂRA.



HOURLY OF COW-DUST.



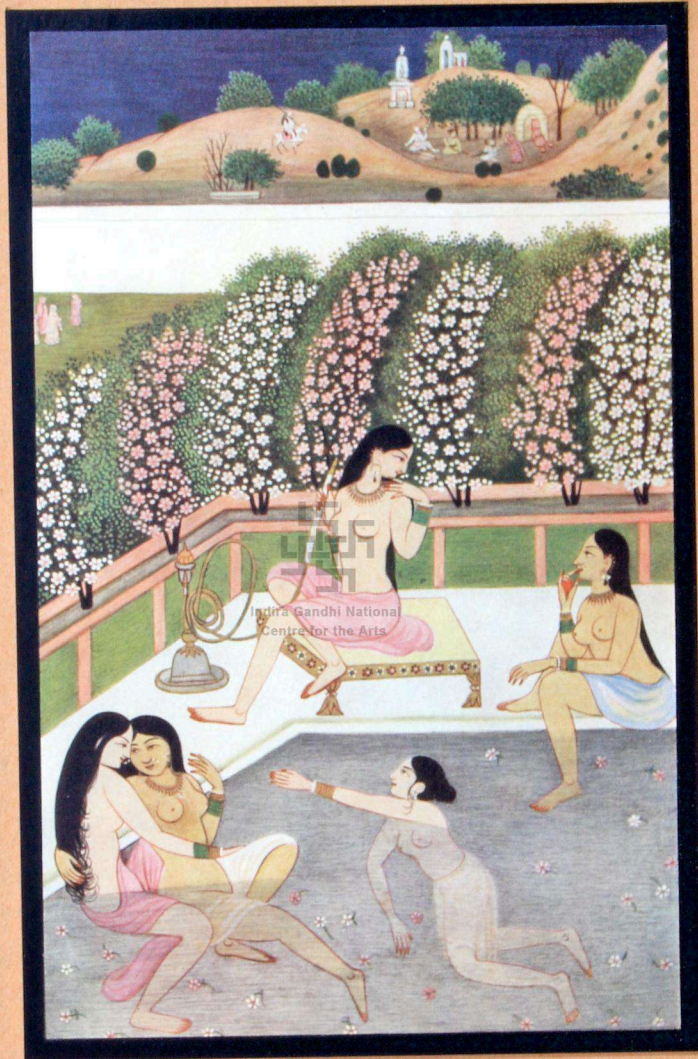
HOURLY OF COW-DUST



PLATE XXVII



UTKANTHITA NAYIKA



LADIES BATHING





THE BIRTH OF GANGÂ



THE BIRTH OF GANGÂ

PLATE XXXII.



SHIVA & PARVATI

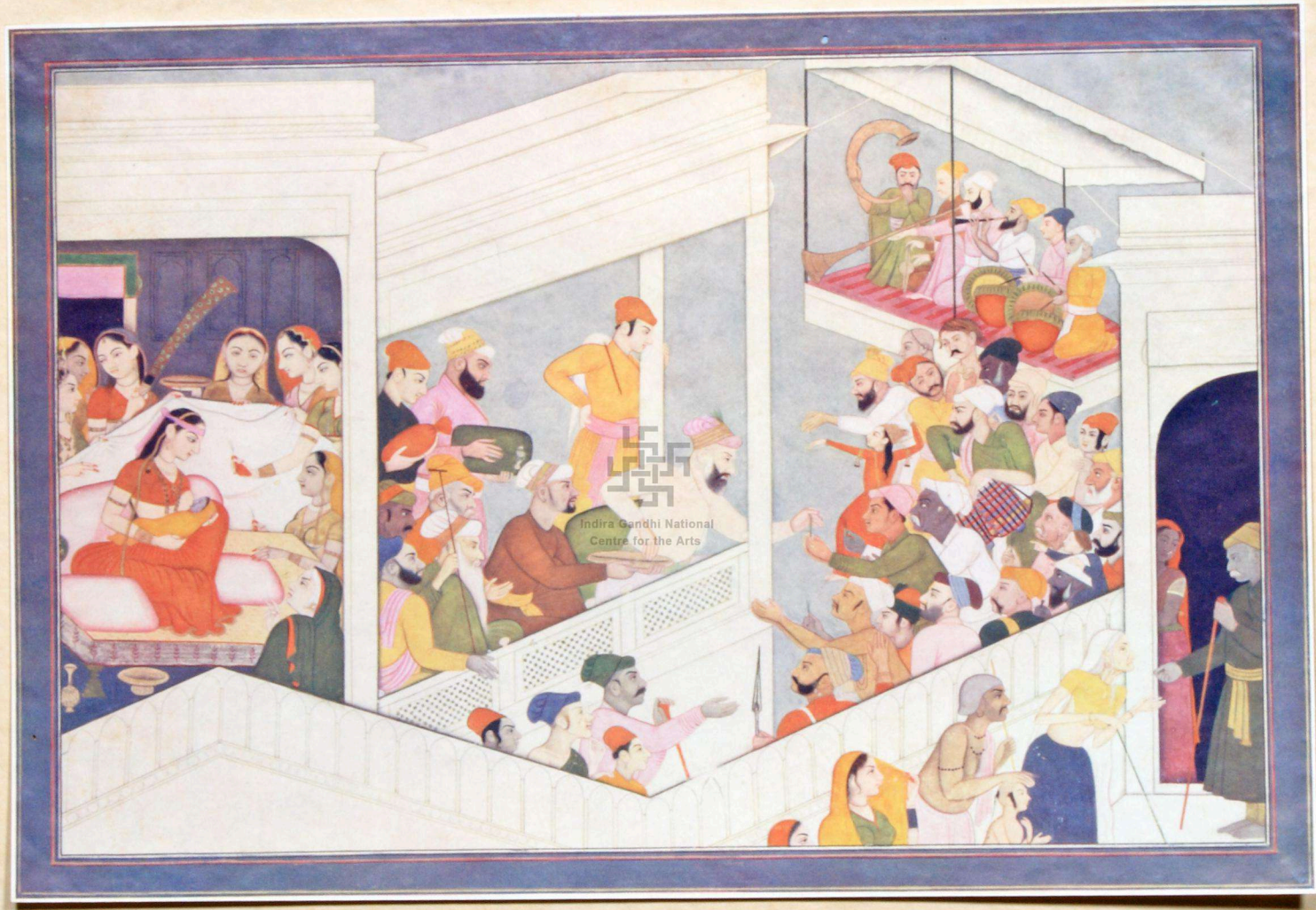
PLATE XXXIII.



SHIVA & PÂRVATÎ.

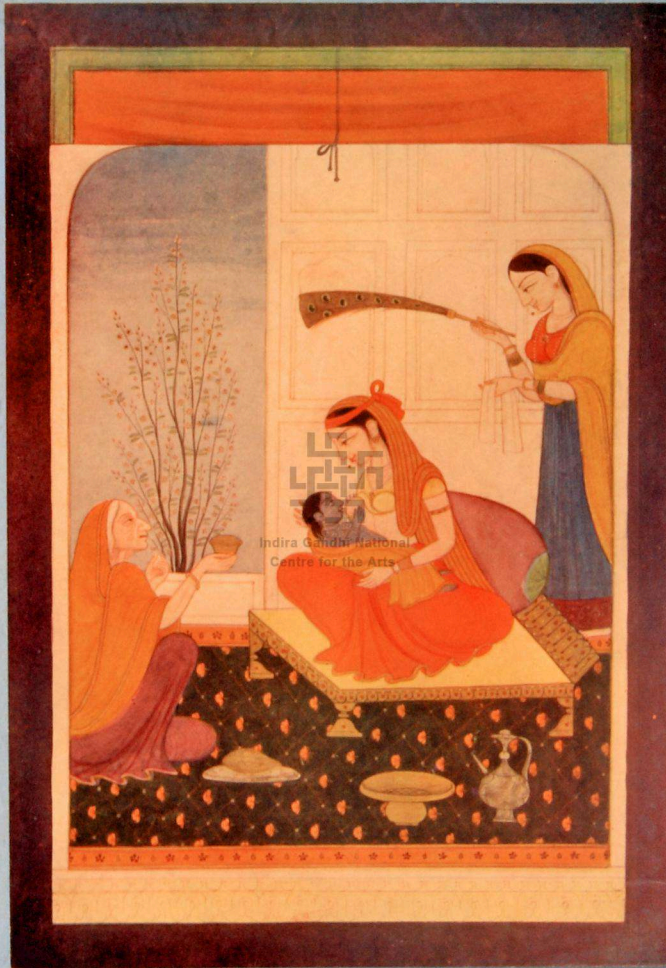


THE DANCE OF SHIVA.

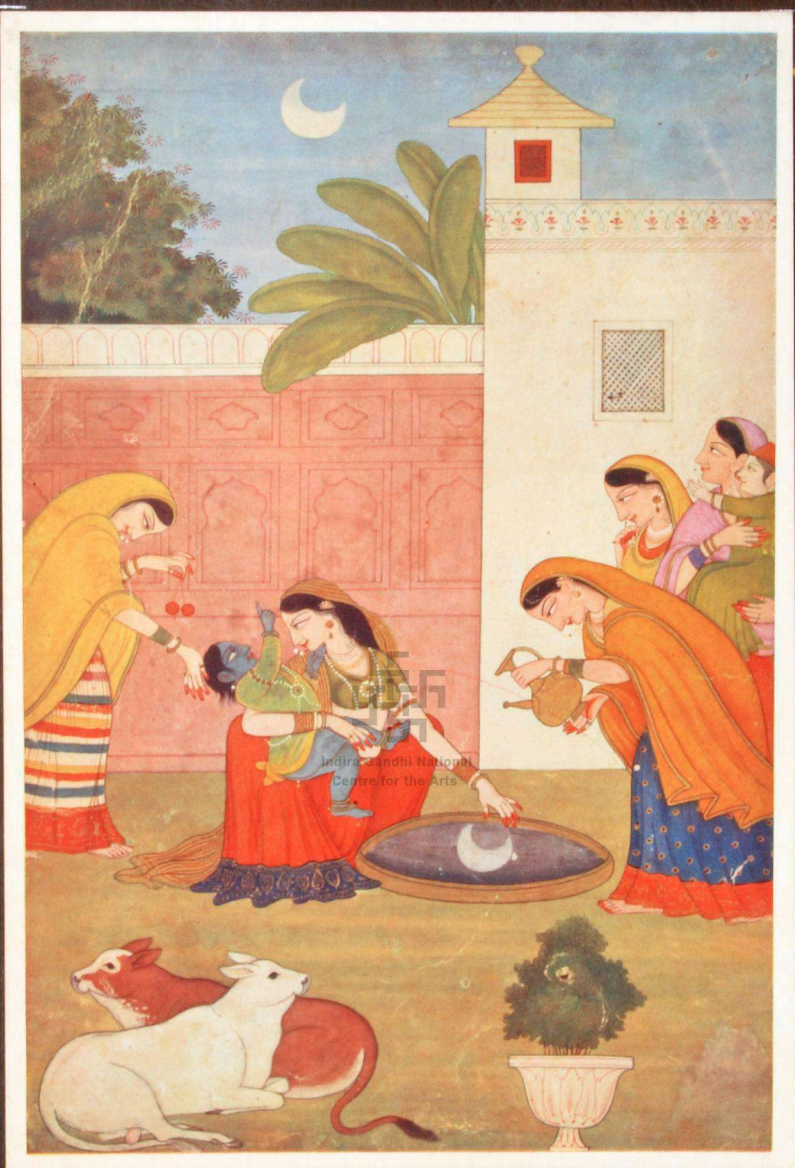


THE BIRTH OF KRISHNA

PLATE XXXVI.



YASHODĀ & KRISHNA



CRYING FOR THE MOON



TOILETTE OF RADHA



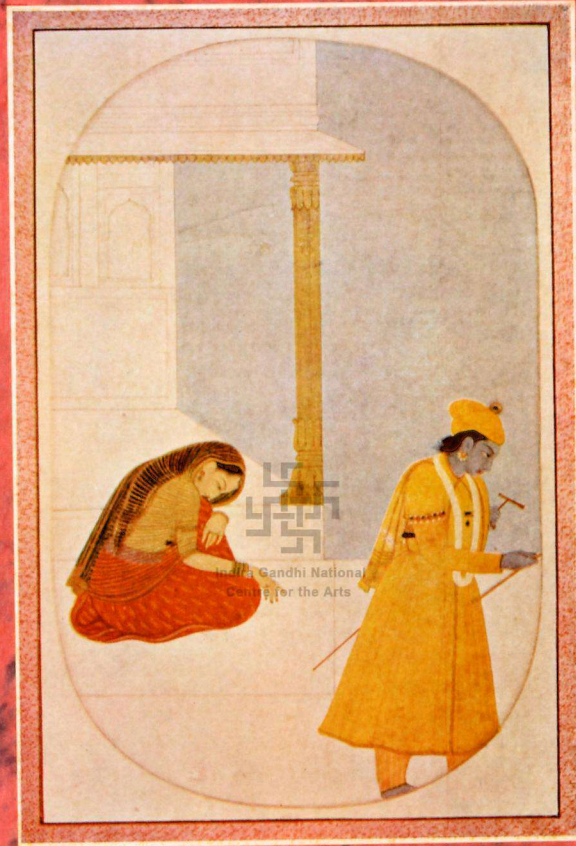
SWINGING RADHĀ

PLATE XL.



RĀDHĀ & KRISHNA

PLATE XLI.



RĀDHĀ'S QUARREL

PLATE XLII.

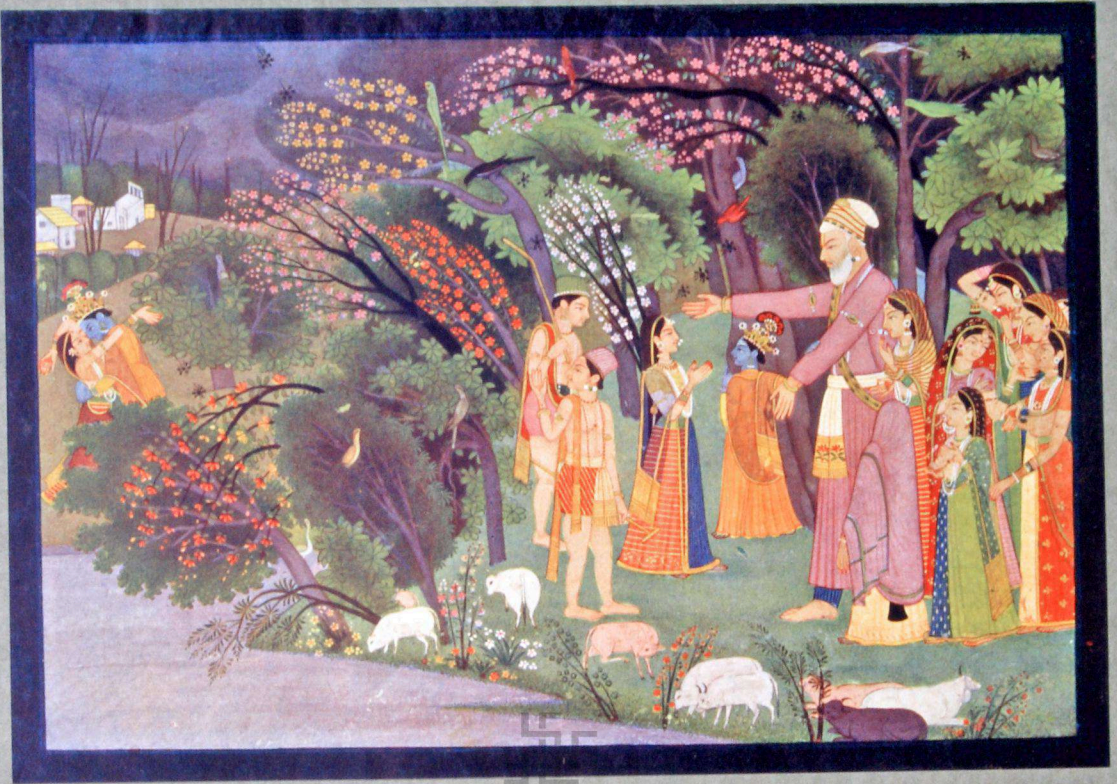


SWĀDHINA PATIKĀ (PROUDHĀ).





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KALIYA-DAMANA



HORI-LILĀ.



RĀMA IN EXILE



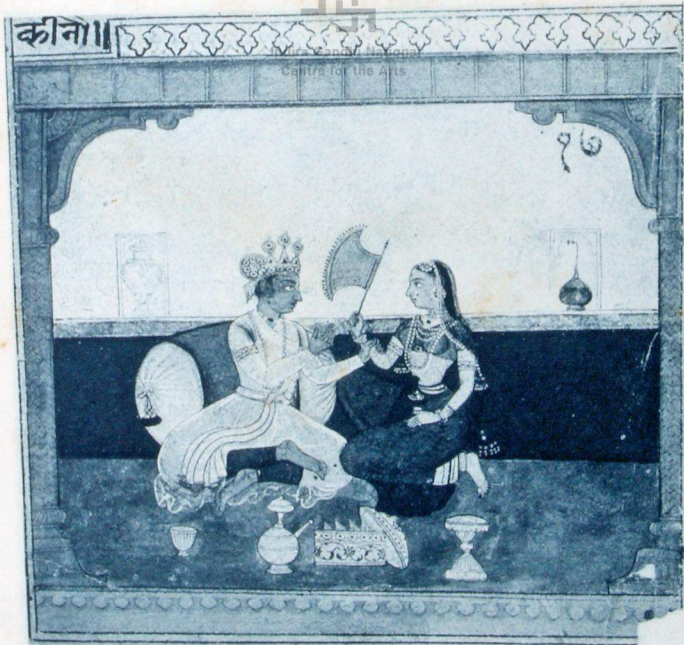
CHĪRA HARĀṆA

PLATE L(A)



RASĪKA-PRIYĀ.

PLATE L(B)



RASĪKA-PRIYĀ.



RÂGINÎ KAKUBHĀ

